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The Week

APPROPRIATELY, Labor Day was marked by the intensification of the argument between those employers who have always opposed organized labor and intend to continue opposing it even under the Recovery Act, and the proponents of true collective bargaining between employers and bona-fide unions. On the side of the employer autocracy were Henry Ford, sulking in his tent while the automobile code went into effect, Dudley Cates, who resigned as Deputy Administrator under General Johnson, in protest against the administration's favorable attitude toward the trade unions, Henry I. Harriman, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce, who issued a statement favorable to the so-called open shop, General Atterbury of the Pennsylvania Railroad, which has always declined to deal with the unions except when the power of labor compelled it to do so, and which led the group of "hard-boiled" railroad executives in their bitter-end fight against the shopmen's unions in 1922, the non-union coal operators who have been blocking a coal code which would open the way to union organization and, in less open fashion, the leaders of many industries who have requested the insertion of the "merit" clause in their codes. On the other side were President Green of the Federation of Labor, the Labor Advisory Board of the N.R.A., and Donald R. Richberg, Counsel of the N.R.A., who in his two Labor Day speeches clearly endorsed genuine unionism while condemning labor racketeering.

MR. Ford's position is discussed in a separate editorial article on page 115 of this issue. Mr. Cates advances a peculiar argument which sounds impartial but really is not. He says that only two kinds of labor organization now exist, neither of which should be recognized by the N.R.A. One is the independent, national trade union, the other the company union. He advocates a new type of union in which labor shall be organized for collective bargaining by whole industries, the workers of each industry chosing their own representatives, but apparently not being permitted to affiliate with workers in other industries or to be represented by "outsiders"—that is, professional labor leaders. There are a number of objections to Mr. Cates's position. First, any organization of labor decreed by employers or government rather than by the workers themselves is not, and cannot be, a truly representative organization. It is merely a fascist tool, bound to be turned to the purposes of disciplining labor rather than exercising influence in behalf of the workers. Second, many genuine unions which already exist do aim to cover all the workers in an industry rather than merely individual trades or crafts—for instance, the miners' union, the garment and clothing workers' unions, the textile union, the group of railroad unions. Under the N.R.A., ordinary unions, to be effective, must achieve industrial organization. Third, labor organizations ought to be allowed to elect professional leaders and to employ outside experts, just as employers' organizations habitually do. Otherwise we endorse the absurdity that a machine operator is necessarily the best man to conduct negotiations or to discuss financial conditions. Finally, it is necessary for workers to have inter-industrial affiliations in order to express their interests on national questions. Nothing is more essential to the success of the new deal than a virile national labor movement.

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AS FOR the varied exponents of the "open shop" who give lip-service to collective bargaining but oppose union recognition, their position, if traced through its deceptive phraseology to its real meaning, is that they are willing to bargain only with somebody over whom they exercise a substantial degree of authority. In other words, they want to be able to impersonate the other party to the bargain. The "merit" clause which they want to insert in codes is a shrewd cover for this intention. It sounds as if unions habitually prevented employers from considering merit in hiring, firing and promotion. As a matter of fact many unions do place checks upon the bosses' actions in these matters, but not such checks as to interfere seriously with the efficiency of industry. If the sole judge of "merit" in subordinates is an autocrat, whether he be the proprietor of a billion-dollar concern or a sub-foreman, the business of choosing and promoting employees is bound to be riddled with favoritism and prejudice, toadying and irresponsible use of power. Union restrictions are aimed to check such anti-social practices, to guard against unjust discharge, to keep promotion open, to safeguard the right to work and, above all, to preserve union organization by preventing discrimination against union workers. An employee whose chance of promotion, whose very tenure of his position, is dependent on the whim of the boss is not likely to join a union if he knows the boss is against it, or to be too assiduous in advancing the interests of his fellows, unless he is a veritable moral hero. We must acknowledge the principle that organized workers should have something to say about hiring, firing and promotion. On the basis of that principle it is possible to build objective standards of "merit" which will help to prevent abuse by either side.

THE murder of Professor Theodore Lessing, noted German criminologist and social philosopher, in Marienbad, Czechoslovakia, whence he had fled from the vengeance of the National Socialist regime, may prove to be the first of a series of similar assassinations at the instigation of the rulers of the Reich who, by officially honoring the assassins of Erzberger and Rathenau, have placed the stamp of approval on and given encouragement to political homicide. Dr. Lessing received much unfavorable notoriety a few years ago for his campaign to prove the insanity of the mass-murderer Haarmann in Hannover, whose revolting crimes were first-page news for months in the entire European press, a notoriety that was changed to respect when a dissection of the malefactor's brain after his execution completely substantiated Lessing's contentions. Originally a liberal Democrat, Theodore Lessing had been forced by his disapproval of the emergency decrees of Brüning's government to the Left wing of the Social Democracy. An attack by him on von Hindenburg for his betrayal of the German people, published in the foreign press, earned him the hatred of the Nazi regime. Like so many others, he paid with his life for his courageous opposition to Fascism. Against the background of recent happenings, however, the assassination of one of Germany's outstanding minds assumes an even more sinister significance. In the last two weeks the kidnaping and assaulting of anti-Fascists in Austria, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, the Saar region and Belgium, have been reported with increasing frequency. In all but two cases, the outrages were ignored. In only one case was a slight penalty exacted. There is a menace in this tolerance on the part of other nations for Nazi brutality within their own borders.

LEGALLY there is no opposition in Germany to the Brown dictatorship. Every independent organization has been abolished; every political group, every labor union, has been absorbed into Hitler's Totalitarian State. The new rulers of Germany have no enemies—and yet they are still arresting them. Daily one reads of Communists beheaded, of Socialists sent to concentration camps, of boys sentenced to eighteen months of prison for distributing illegal newspapers. Surely the Nazis are not striking blows in the air. They must have real opponents or they would not reveal their fear by the severity of their punishments. An article recently published in London by The New Statesman and Nation describes the nature of the secret revolutionary movement now spreading through the country. It seems that the enemies of Hitler are being organized into so-called "revolutionary groups of five." Only one of the five persons in each group knows the identity of other leaders, although there are dozens of such groups in the larger factories. A central direction for all the groups in a given locality is maintained by a carefully chosen conspiratorial organization, the "sub-district committee," consisting of a few experienced revolutionists. This form of organization, which is particularly hard for the authorities to combat, was originated by the Russian Nihilists during the 1870's; Dostoevsky first described it in "The Possessed." At present German industry is honeycombed with such groups, in which former Communists coöperate with former Socialists and with people who formerly belonged to no political party; the united front inside of Germany is now an accomplished fact. Incidentally, this secret movement is one of the few forces now making for peace in Europe. Hitler's government would like to embark on a new war, but it cannot mobilize an army without putting arms into the hands of its enemies. War against France, Poland or Russia means revolution at home.

ALTHOUGH the teachers of Chicago have not received their pay for 1933, the agitation to save the teachers has been absorbed in the larger demand to save the schools. The new school board appointed by Mayor Edward J. Kelly has produced an economy budget and passed it with one dissenting vote, that of a woman whose long service on the

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board gives her opinion a value outweighing that of her male colleagues, who are apparently strangers to education even in its elementary aspects of grammar and arithmetic. The economies of the budget are supposed to amount to $5 million; to save this sum the kindergartens are reduced 50 percent, physical education in the high schools 50 percent and assistant and district superintendents 50 percent. The bureau of vocational guidance is abolished; manual and household-arts training in elementary schools is abolished; the Crane Junior College is abolished; each principal is given two schools to direct and the teaching load of high-school teachers is increased to seven periods a day.

THE Citizens' "Save Our Schools" Committee has entered the field with the coöperation of the universities, the churches, the newspapers (except The Tribune), the women's clubs and settlements and social forces generally, in a desperate last-minute effort to defeat this violation of the people's interest and will. The Committee is holding meetings throughout the city. It argues that the immediate deficit is caused by the taxpayers' strike, which is passing, and the outrageous graft which an honest administration can end overnight. The temporary shortage can be spread over a number of years. The Committee points out that the saving of $1,273,994 accomplished by discharging and demoting 1,500 persons will be largely eaten up by the cost of reconstructing the present junior college and high schools. Contracts for such changes, and presumably for future building to restore the institutions abolished, are always a source of profit to insiders. Moreover, it is a question whether even the big taxpayers will profit by crippling the schools. Experiments in Chicago itself have shown the close relation between environment and juvenile crime. The school is the only public civic force dealing constructively with the environment. The money saved on schools will almost certainly be lost in other ways—for example, in thefts of automobiles, a branch of crime in which Chicago already excels, with a rate ten times as high as that of Los Angeles, and in which 70 percent of the thefts are charged to boys under twenty.

CHICAGO is beginning to inquire what strings are being pulled on Mayor Kelly, for it can hardly be surmised that he would voluntarily sabotage his political career by offending public sentiment on such a wide front. There are two forces under suspicion. One is the Roman Catholic Church. The Church supports its own educational system and insists on Catholic parents' sending their children to parochial schools. Naturally it wishes to reduce taxation for the public schools. Mayor Kelly was under indictment some years ago as engineer of the infamous Sanitary District Board, which grafted millions on contracts which he signed. When the indictments against other members of the Board were redrawn by the grand jury, Kelly's name was omitted, it is alleged by the interposition of Cardinal Mundelein. There is one way in which the Cardinal can clear himself and his Church from the charge of being accessory to crime against the community —that is, by joining his leading Chicago layman, Professor John A. Lapp, in coming out squarely in defense of the schools.

THE other string is that of the bankers, who have constantly grudged loans to the Board of Education and clamored incessantly for reduction in taxes. While the Citizens' Committee is trying, vainly thus far, to restrain the sabotage of the schools through the courts, The Herald-Examiner and The American have taken hold of the bankers' string. It is known that Kelly was permitted by the federal government to settle his income-tax-dodging case out of court by a payment of $102,000. It is suspected that this arrangement was promoted by powerful financial interests who are believed to have intervened on behalf of the late Mayor Cermak on a similar occasion. This seems the only plausible explanation of the force to which Kelly is yielding. The Hearst papers assert that Kelly's income, which he, like Capone and Cermak, dared not declare, was the result of his large take as engineer of the Sanitary Board. They quote President Roosevelt, who as Governor of New York removed Sheriff Farley for refusing to confess the source of an income far beyond the possibility of saving from his salary. "Where did you get it?" is heard daily more loudly in Chicago. The mayor refuses to answer, and sends his police to arrest school children who ask it too impertinently on the streets about City Hall.

THE Aluminum Company of America gambled upon the fear and desperation of its employees and lost. The experiment was conducted at New Kensington, Pa. This was once a prosperous center for several industries, but now depends almost entirely upon the Aluminum Company plant, which normally employs over 5,000 men and women and which even now carries approximately 3,600 names on its payroll. The scarcity of jobs was counted on to produce the necessary respect for company wishes. Accordingly, about the middle of August, just as the company-union question was being bitterly fought at Washington, the Aluminum Company distributed at the New Kensington plant a pamphlet outlining a company-union plan and asked its employees to vote on it. Officials were assigned to interview every employee in order to steer him along the right path. These officials denounced labor unions in no uncertain terms and branded them as rackets primarily designed to fleece workers of a portion of their pay. Employees generally maintained a noncommittal attitude. But when the final vote was tabulated it was found that 810 voted for the company union and 2,799 against it. The wage earners voted almost solidly against the company union, since the majority vote embraced chiefly the superintendents, foremen and office workers. So decisive was the New

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Kensington vote that the company abandoned its original idea of trying the experiment at its other plants. Virtually all of the 2,799 have signed up for the A.F. of L. federal union, although only about half that number are actually enrolled as members. The reason is that many of the workers cannot afford the $2 initiation fee. Two dollars is an imposing sum to the many women who earn less than $10 for a five-day and forty-hour week. These lower-bracket earners cannot figure out what has happened to the presidentially decreed minimum wage of from $12 to $15. Perhaps some of the committees so energetically engaged in checking up on soda fountains and wiener stands ought to pay a visit to Mellon's Aluminum Works and find out.

THE full report of the American Civil Liberties Union for 1932-33 is a good deal more than a resumé of the activities of a public-spirited organization; it deserves study as a sort of fever chart for the past and most eventful year of the depression. The low points in the record, labeled simply "losses," have a meaning which that term does not convey; they mean that there have been severe disorders in the social anatomy, that there have been riots and demonstrations and that these have been suppressed by beatings and imprisonment and by the violation of civil rights in general. The sections labeled "gains," on the other hand, since the Union is skeptical in assessing its victories, show that there have been some substantial improvements which must be analyzed in detail. This is, obviously, no time for those working for civil liberties to relax, yet if a graph were prepared on the basis of the Union's report it would show that the most critical period was passed in the dark months late in 1932, when the Bonus Army was forcibly driven out of Washington, when the Scottsboro boys were under the immediate threat of execution and when the Department of Labor's lawless drive against aliens, a major scandal of the last administration, was at its height.

THEREAFTER, the report notes, some significant changes took place. The attitudes and activities of state and federal officials have, with qualifications, generally improved, though city and county officials continue their traditional repressive tactics. The drive against aliens has, broadly speaking, been discontinued, although many cases hanging over from the Hoover administration have not been cleared up. The second bonus army met without federal interference with the legal privileges of its members; the censorship exercised by the Post Office Department has apparently been stopped. Since the fall of 1932 the Scottsboro boys have won new trials, and the Centralia prisoners, with the exception of one who refused parole, have been released. The record of the Union's activities for the year is among the longest in its history. More than two hundred cases are listed in the summary of gains and losses, with the victories, in the cases of censorship and repression against isolated individuals, far outnumbering the defeats.

HERE again, however, a significant exception must be noted, for the gains recently made in the courts have been more than offset by the widespread use of troops aganst striking farmers and workers. Troops were called out in five states in a brief period in the spring of 1933, making an unprecedented record. Often Governors have called out troops with slight, if any, justification; in Illinois, where the situation in the coal fields has produced the worst state of repression in the country, the Governor has been unwilling to act except through military authority. These facts, together with the wave of lynchings in the South, make it sufficiently clear that the whole character of the struggle for civil rights has changed; that while individual liberties are less endangered, widespread movements of protest are suffering intimidation and repression on a greater scale than in the past. In answering the question as to why, after these years of the depression, no strong working-class organization has developed, the Civil Liberties Union report notes simply that where such organizations have grown up, or showed signs of increased strength, they have been quickly attacked.

IT REMAINS to be seen whether three expressions can be forever banished from all editorial columns, including our own. Those expressions are "conditions," "situation" and "remains to be seen." The crisis in language cries, wails and bellows, if not for reform, why then at least for gradual mitigation. In the language of liberal journalism, *conditions* always lead to a *situation,* which, unless somebody takes drastic steps and does not fail to consider the underlying political and economic factors, will eventuate in a crisis, the results of which *remain to be seen.* The trouble is that there are no good words to take the place of these. If they were suddenly removed from the journalist's vocabulary, conditions would immediately produce a dangerous situation in the ink-and-paper industry. Whether the result of the crisis would be eventually beneficial would—oh, dammit—remain to be seen.

Henry Ford, Individualist

HENRY FORD'S reluctance to sign the automobile code and participate in the National Recovery effort is, in one sense, fortunate. At this writing his final decision has not been announced, and no statement has come from him. He may decide to be discreet and avoid an open break with the administration. But, if he follows his inclination and declines to coöperate, he will have exposed a conflict which is latent all through the country, and which needs to be fought out in the open. There is a concealed infection in the flesh of the New Deal, poisoning its arteries and vital organs. If the cor-

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ruption can be brought to the surface, we may be able to treat it; we shall know before long whether this kind of body politic can be restored to health or must be allowed to die. The struggle between Mr. Ford and Mr. Roosevelt typifies the basic difficulty with which the whole recovery effort has to cope. It is the struggle between rugged American individualism and a collective administration for our economy.

Henry Ford is the exemplar of rugged individualism as applied to highly mechanized industry. He is not, of course, the more primitive type who speculates with land or natural resources, or the conqueror of power who deals in money and finance capital. He is not the small proprietor of the corner grocery or the butcher shop. But, in his own realm, he is closely akin to all these in motive and point of view. It seems to him that success has come solely through his personal effort, his native shrewdness. The gigantic organization which goes under his name, with its hundreds of thousands of participants, its millions of indirect dependents, seems to him in a literal sense "his" business, his personal property to do with as he likes, just as the cow pasture and the cow seem to the small farmer his inalienable property.

Mr. Ford has never been able to endure a sharing of his power. Stockholders who dared to object have been roughly expelled. No banker has ever been allowed to gain a fingerhold on his plants. (This is probably fortunate, for the bankers would not have managed them so well as Mr. Ford himself; nevertheless his hostility to bankers, popular as it has made him at times, is merely one expression of his intense dislike for coöperation.) His autocratic treatment of engineers and executives is notorious. Even better known is his exploitation of dealers—it was they who, willy-nilly, saved him from the bankers in the early twenties, when the dealers were compelled to carry his surplus stock and either find the credit for it from local bankers or go under.

His reductions of price to the public have, more recently, been made at the dealers' expense. The dramatic secrecy about new models, the long and unexplained delays during which everyone is kept in suspense, are ruinous to dealers and workers alike. Indeed, the injury which this prima donna of machinery has inflicted upon his dealer organization is doubtless largely responsible for the loss of a great part of his formerly exclusive market to competitors. The Ford Motor company has never joined, or coöperated with, the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce, the trade association of the industry. It has never published, or revealed to anyone, its financial statements or accounting reports. And no matter how loudly Mr. Ford has declaimed about the virtues of high wages and short hours, he has never permitted his workers to have anything to say about them, or to share in their establishment. At the first sign of organization, or of independence from employer-decreed rules and regulations, the Ford worker finds himself on the street.

It would be unjust not to give Mr. Ford his due, and, in doing this, not to recognize the qualities which have made him what he is. He is, of course, a gifted mechanic, who loves machinery so much that his principal ambition has always been to make as good a car as could be made for a price low enough so that almost everybody could have one. It took an obstinate, resourceful pioneer to lead the automobile industry out of its early chaos, to substitute science in the shop for shoddy guesswork and cheap salesmanship, to grasp and apply the principles of mass production, to have the courage continually to reduce prices in the faith that larger sales would repay him. Mr. Ford is, within his proper field, a real craftsman. The job itself has interested him more than the money to be made out of it. He probably is keenly aware that without his independence he could not have led the industry as he has done, and so he regards this independence as his most precious possession.

But the automobile industry, like industry in general, is no longer in the pioneer stage, and if it is left under the autocratic control of hardy individuals, the people who compose it and depend upon it are bound to suffer. The best of intentions on the part of single, isolated employers are not enough in a society like ours in which the welfare of each is knit with the welfare of all. Take, for instance, Mr. Ford's high-wage policy. He gained from it a great deal of publicity, and it was given lip-service throughout the country, but it never became effective. Even in Mr. Ford's own plants during prosperity, wage earnings were not advanced anywhere nearly so rapidly as the value of the output of cars. In the industry, as in manufacturing as a whole, average wage earnings actually declined between 1923 and 1928. And when depression came, the faint power of individual good intentions completely surrendered before the general confusion. The story of unemployment in Detroit during the past few years is one of the most shameful incidents of modern history. Mr. Ford took no collective responsibility for the unemployed whom he would need again, once his production increased, nor even great personal responsibility in charity. The burden fell largely on the unfortunate city of Detroit, which could not tax the company whose plants lay outside its limits.

The fact that Mr. Ford now is content with maintaining better labor conditions than the code specifies as a minimum is, under these circumstances, a confession of complete social blindness. What guarantee have the workers that these favors will be continued and sufficiently improved? What assurance has Mr. Ford that they will be extended to workers throughout the land? He does not understand that nothing but a collective plan and purpose, backed by countrywide, aggressive organizations of labor, can effectuate the policy in which he professes to believe. One is tempted to conclude that he

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means to use his wage-and-hour standards as a mere adjunct to his advertising, without caring whether they help the general welfare.

Mr. Ford's inclination in these matters is far more significant than it would be if it represented himself alone. In truth it expresses a survival which exists in many millions of our people. His defiance will be praised and echoed by employers, farmers, and many others who still believe that individual power and individual gain are the touchstones of true Americanism. Many who have in form assented to the codes are in practice allowing their individualistic traits to nullify them, and would go further backwards if they received encouragement. The other automobile employers themselves are, in the important respect of union recognition, no further advanced than the Ford Company. If Mr. Ford stands out against the N.R.A., he will become the champion of all who cannot give up the deep opposition to collectivism.

It is this strong tradition, not yet killed by the thin pretense of coöperation which has been imposed upon it, which raises doubts as to the success of any program like that of the administration. The President and his advisers are saying, and are acting as if they believed, that voluntary coöperation in the general interest can be had among profit-seeking, property-owning business men, between them and the consumer-worker, between them and the government. Can this miracle be achieved? Will the wild horses of pioneer America at last be tamed to drive in harness? Henry Ford says no. He says it honestly. It may be well that he does so. For if the conflict is seen for what it is, and openly fought, we shall test how strong the trend toward collectivism really is. If the Recovery Administration wins, we may be able to collectivize by reason and persuasion. If Henry Ford fights and wins, capitalism in America will be well on its way to complete self-destruction. In that case we can create a reasonable and socially motivated industry only by abolishing private employers entirely.

Men at Work

THE WESTERN Pennsylvania coal strike, settled by a precarious truce which may end at any moment and which was made possible only by the miners' faith in President Roosevelt, was a natural human protest, a development not in the least unexpected in view of the terrible working and living conditions of the miners. No one familiar with these conditions could reasonably expect anything else. Indeed, to one who knew the dangers under which the miners work, the miserable wages they receive and the virtual slavery in which they have been kept, the only surprising features of the strike were that it was so long delayed and that it was settled with relatively little disorder. The patience of the miners was exhausted. For years they had been starved and terrorized, badgered with innumerable grave and petty forms of theft and intimidation. They would have been acting in an abnormal fashion if they had not used, at the first opportunity, their one effective weapon of protest.

Similarly, no one familiar with the working conditions in the steel mills can see very much in the future of that industry except prolonged and bitter labor struggles—unless these conditions are quickly improved. To hope for anything else, at this late day, is the blindest and most irresponsible romanticism, the kind of optimism that can only be maintained by closing one's eyes to the obvious. The scandals in these industries are not new. They have merely been brought out into the open by the coal strike and by the debate over the adoption of N.R.A. codes for coal and steel.

It is not too much to say that the coal strike was forced by the operators, forced not only by their obstinacy in refusing to adopt a code to conform with the requirements of the National Recovery Act, but by the very tactics they have employed to keep the miners submissive. Miss Rose M. Stein, who has lately completed a survey of the western Pennsylvania mines, uncovering even more shocking practices in the dark history of the industry than were generally known, has pointed out that the spy system, for all the difficulties it causes, inevitably results in driving the miners together in formal or informal organizations. If an individual miner or steel worker so much as complains, the spy system strikes swiftly and decisively; he is reported as a chronic grouch, or—what is almost equivalent to a sentence of starvation or exile—he is tagged as a Communist and is either fired or laid off or placed in some poor section of the mine where he cannot earn a living. Yet if a number complain together, punishment so swift and drastic is impossible, and their grievances are often answered. Over a long period of time, and at an enormous cost in terms of human suffering, the miners have learned this truth, and the strike was in part a practical application of their knowledge.

In the meantime the individual miner who has been blacklisted is almost tragically helpless. The urban worker whose home is at least geographically separated from his factory is free and privileged compared with the miner in a company-owned town. Each company town has its rules and regulations, medieval in character, covering not only wage rates, but civil rights, rent, sanitation, relief, medical care—employer control which extends to the sort of house the miner may rent and the store in which he may buy his food. Ostensibly no one is compelled to live in a company house, but if a worker expresses a desire to live elsewhere he is usually turned down when he asks for a job, or rejected by the examining physician as physically unfit. If he decides to move into a company house, his health mysteriously improves. A fence often surrounds the entire town, with guards

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stationed at the gates. No-trespassing signs are frequently put up, particularly when trouble is brewing. In some cases a miner must sign a lease which gives the company the right to eject anyone "objectionable to the company" from his dwelling. In one mining town in Fayette County only the members of the miner's family, the physician and the undertaker have the right to enter a miner's home. It is not surprising that the operators, at the hearings on the codes, insisted that all labor-organization meetings be held near the mine and on company property! There their control is complete.

Ostensibly, again, the miner is not compelled to buy at a company store, but refusal to do so is quickly punished by lay-off or by transfer to a poor section of the mine. Prices charged in the stores often range from 10 to 30 percent higher than those in adjoining communities. With exorbitant levies for housing and food, many miners remain permanently indebted to the companies; some work for years without receiving a cent in cash. In the Frick mines and in the United States Steel mills a particularly vicious type of exploitation has operated during the depression, through company unemployment relief and through the share-the-work plan. The worker was not allowed to apply for state aid, but was given a limited amount of credit at the company store. For two years the most loyal employees were given from one to three days' work a week, and credit was extended to approximately 90 percent of the workers. When full-time operation was resumed, 60 percent of the net wage was applied on past debts. There was thus little release of new purchasing power. There was merely increased labor for the bookkeepers.

Practices in the steel industry seem even more outrageous than those in coal-mining towns, because the steel operators, with their elaborate propaganda machinery, are in the habit of talking eloquently about the well-being of the workers in the industry, as if to salt their wounds. Long hours, low wages, the strangulation of every form of protest—these practices, revealed by the great strike of 1919, have continued to prevail. The physical danger of work in the mills is less widely recognized. In times of active production the steel industry kills workers at the rate of two every three days. Semi-skilled workers can get life insurance only by paying rates from 30 to 50 percent above the average; common laborers (comprising the bulk of those employed in the industry, despite Mr. Robert P. Lamont's recent testimony that the majority are skilled workers) must pay 55 to 100 percent above the average insurance rate. Mr. Horace Davis, who has analyzed and checked the "official" statistics of the steel companies in preparing his forthcoming book, "Labor and Steel," estimates that compensation premiums for iron and steel plants are from one and a half to four and a half times over the average for all industries. The figures of the National Safety Council, an employer-subsidized organization, show that severity of accidents in steel is from 20 to 30 percent above the average for all industrial classifications. The big companies, in their drive for "no lost-time accidents," have adopted the policy of forcing injured workers to come to the plant to draw their pay even when they are too badly hurt to work—a practice which artificially depresses the accident rate and which makes the casualty lists of steel seem less grave than they actually are.

Such statistics, moreover, take no account of the cost of occupational diseases. Exact numbers, of course, are not known, yet general estimates can be made, based on such facts as that pneumonia alone, in a normal year, takes more lives among the steel workers than all accidents combined, great as the accident toll is, and that non-fatal disease causes more lost time than non-fatal accidents. Hot-mill cramps is the most feared disease in the mills, yet is not listed in the medical manuals and the steel companies do not officially recognize it—although six men were stated to have died of the cramps in one week recently, and the Associated Press, on August 4, reported that at Charleroi 127 men so stricken had been carried out of the mill during a single shift. Most of these diseases —and for that matter, most of the accidents—are preventable. Work in the field of occupational disease, in fact, is at the same stage that accident prevention was when agitation began for workmen's compensation laws. It goes without saying that the steel operators have scarcely distinguished themselves by their efforts to aid such research. Safety boards usually attempt to place responsibility for industrial accidents on the "carelessness" of the workers, and the steel operators have consistently tried to minimize and obscure the dangers of the industry rather than to get at their source. In the whole complex field of labor relations, the operators are proving again what they have so often and so terribly demonstrated in the past—that the lives of their workers, as well as the censure of the great mass of the people, mean very little to them compared with the chance for profits.

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One Hundred Million Peasants

Will the "Green International" Revive in the Balkans?

LARGE and growing masses of peasants scattered through 280,000 villages of the densely populated and preponderantly agrarian lands of eastern Europe and the Balkans—Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Austria; but especially the first five—are getting tired of being the beasts of burden of capitalist civilization and are turning Left. The situation is a vast, complicated one. For brevity's sake, I shall try here to simplify it somewhat by dealing first in some detail with Jugoslavia, which I know best and which in one way or another, is typical of the other countries; then, briefly, with the rest of that part of Europe whose backwardness and immense undeveloped natural wealth, coupled with the fact that it verges on Soviet Russia and is inhabited mainly by Slavs, inevitably will make it more and more important in world politics.

Jugoslavia is a beautiful country with great level stretches of rich soil, immense timber and mineral wealth, deep harbors on the Adriatic, navigable rivers, water power galore—all as yet largely undeveloped. The masses of people, in my opinion, are the best raw human material with which the rulers of a new state could start if they honestly and intelligently planned to create a good, progressive civilization. In point of her rulers, however, Jugoslavia, like all the Balkans, could be in no worse plight. Militarists and corrupt politicians supported and controlled by big-power governments (notably the French) and international-finance capital have been at the helm in Belgrade from the country's inception in 1918, constantly and deliberately unsettling it by keeping it divided on nationalistic and religious lines so they might stay in power and more neatly exploit it.

By 1928 the Belgrade racketeers had not only cornered all the high political offices, but had gained control of the country's economic life. In that year their power was threatened by a few Peasant party leaders, notably the Croat, Stefan Radich. To save their interests, a political gangster intimately associated with the Royal Palace assassinated Radich in the Parliament, creating an international scandal; whereupon King Alexander—a man of much personal charm, force and physical courage, an autocrat and tyrant by nature, a militarist educated at the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg, a cunning go-getter and a genius at Balkan intrigue, corruption and terrorism—abolished the Parliament, leaped into the saddle as dictator and proceeded to "liquidate" other Peasant and radical leaders. In this he had the support of international capital and at least one power—France—keenly interested in Jugoslavia for military reasons. In fact—I say this advisedly—the murder of Radich and the destruction of democracy were perpetrated as much for the sake of international capital and big-power diplomacy and military plans as for that of Alexander and the Belgrade racketeers.

Till 1930 the dictatorship was lucky. Jugoslav agricultural products were in demand in Italy and Germany, and, since profiteers and politicians were not yet well enough organized to take quite all the profits of their toil, the peasants kept quiet. Besides, one had best keep quiet. *Terror*. . . . In 1931, however, Jugoslavia's export trade bumped up against the raised tariff walls of other countries. That year's grain harvest was a total loss for the peasants. What profits there were went to profiteers and political schemers in Belgrade. Simultaneously the people at large learned that the big shots, including the King (who pays himself a salary thirteen times greater than that received by the President of the United States), having no faith in the politico-economic structure of the country under their own rule, were transferring their private funds to banks in England, America, France, Switzerland and Holland.

I arrived in Jugoslavia in May, 1932. The depression was in its second year, discontent was deep and wide, and the *diktatura* was tightening the screws. Prisons were jammed, political gatherings forbidden, cities full of secret agents and rumors of uprisings in the provinces. Assassinations of opposition leaders occurred weekly. . . . Since then the economic crisis has simply engulfed the country, which is 80-percent peasant. Last year the crops were abundant, but there were no profitable markets for them; which, I am informed, is also the case this year. In villages of, say, 150 families in Croatia, which I visited early this year, all the peasants in the community do not own the equivalent of $20 in cash among them. Most peasants have plenty to eat, but cannot buy shoes, clothes, salt, kerosene or matches. They eat unsalted turkeys and geese, because they cannot sell their poultry and haven't the few *dinars* for a kilo of salt. In regions where matches are no longer used village mayors detail a different household each week to keep a fire going day and night, and women from other homes come with pots and shovels for live coals.

The prices of agricultural products have dropped from 30 to 90 percent in the last two years; in some places products have lost all monetary value, while most necessities the *selyak* must buy are as high as

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ever. Serb peasants near Belgrade must sell two sheep, when they *can* sell them, to buy leather for a pair of sandals. In Dalmatia people give two quarts of excellent wine for a box of matches.

Two-fifths of the peasants no longer own the properties on which they live. Indebted to banks, the government and private usurers, and with property values down nearly 50 percent, they owe more than their places are worth. Knowing insurrections would occur if creditors tried to dispossess them, the government declared a moratorium for most peasant debts in 1931, and has renewed it several times since. Renewals of the moratorium, of course, cannot go on forever. These and other financial evils already have weakened the banking structure to such an extent that collapse is being prevented only by artificial emergency props, which the dictatorship may not be able to manufacture indefinitely.

Industrially, Jugoslavia is little developed. Of the 700,000 industrial workers one-third are pure proletarians; the other two-thirds are peasants who work in industries when they get a chance, but those who don't get a chance are better off than those who do, for the average industrial wage last year was the equivalent of twenty-six cents a day for ten hours' work, and is less this year. In Karlovac, Croatia, textile workers get $1.30 a week for sixty hours' work. In a factory in Zagorje, which last year made 20 million *dinars,* female workers receive fifty-two cents for 164 work hours in two weeks! Against these wages, consider that bread costs from three to six cents a loaf, matches (a Kreuger monopoly) nearly two cents a box, salt (a government monopoly) from five to nine cents a kilo, sugar twenty cents a kilo, while factory-made clothes and shoes were simply beyond the average proletarian family's means even before wage cuts.

Nearly 85 percent of industry and banking business in Jugoslavia is capitalized and managed or controlled by English, French, German, Austrian and other foreign "money imperialists," who in recent years have sunk their hooks into the country's economic life. In this they have had the coöperation of the Belgrade political racketeers, many of whom, including the King, are shareholders in foreign-controlled factories, mines and forest-exploitation companies without having invested a penny. The wealth which Jugoslav hands create for them out of Jugoslav raw materials under the protection of the Belgrade terror rule they withdraw from Jugoslavia as quickly as it is made. Some English mining and German textile companies pay even in these times as high as 300 and 400 percent dividends—to investors outside Jugoslavia! During Alexander's first year as dictator foreign interests pulled out of Jugoslavia over two billion *dinars* of Jugoslav-created capital.

The masses of people in all parts of Jugoslavia see that they are being separated from their natural resources; that capitalism in Jugoslavia is capitalism at its worst and that the country is drifting into the situation Russia escaped by having had a revolution against Tsarism (of which Alexander's regime is a shabby imitation) and the racketeering of international finance.

In Bulgaria the situation is essentially the same as in Jugoslavia and is considerably worse in some respects. Most people have no money for clothes, matches, salt, kerosene, or chemicals for their vineyards and orchards. Half the peasants owe more than they are worth. The 70,000 industrial workers are much worse off than the Jugoslav proletariat. Some earn the equivalent of four cents a day. The government under King Boris' generals and Macedonian-bandit ministers, till lately financially and diplomatically supported by Mussolini, is not an open dictatorship, but maintains itself in power by worse terror than Alexander's gang.

Rumania is but a larger Bulgaria; her foreign-owned industry is more developed, and King Carrol's, like Alexander's, government is a part of the French, instead of the Italian, imperialist diplomacy.

Poland, under Pilsudski's iron heel, in many respects is only a greater Jugoslavia. In the Warsaw Kurjer, the Polish conservative peasant leader Witos described conditions in villages as follows:

> Even in the most fortunate cases peasants no longer can afford sugar. Salt will soon be the sole "luxury." Matches, where they still have them, are being split in two to save them. Live coals are being carried from house to house in pots. . . . There is much illness because of exposure and lack of clothes and food. . . . In one village I know there were twenty-two subscribers to newspapers; now there is only one. . . . Few peasants will be able to buy artificial fertilizers.

This, to a large extent, goes also for big sections of Austria, Bohemia and most of Slovakia.

Most important of all, these countries are fearfully overpopulated. Practically no village in the territory under consideration has an economic capacity sufficient to afford comfort and security to all its inhabitants, even according to the low standard of life there. Indeed, in relation to their economic capacity under the existing system, most peasant communities in these seven states are from 25 to 75 percent overpopulated, with no room for new villages. From one-fourth to three-fourths of the population consists of landless paupers, proletarians with no opportunity to earn a decent living according to local standards and of peasants with so little soil and other means of maintaining themselves that they perennially verge on destitution.

Overpopulation was a problem throughout that region even before the War. The War decreased the population by about 3 millions, but the birth rate is so high that those losses have since been made up several times and population is increasing by leaps and bounds. Moreover, today almost no part of the human surplus piling up in villages can emigrate with any hope of individual economic betterment or of being able to help those left behind with money earned in America.

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That 100 million peasants will eventually become alive politically is almost inevitable. They have rich insurrectional traditions behind them. Moreover, immediately after the War, led by such glorious demagogues as Radich of Jugoslavia, Stambuliski of Bulgaria and other so-called Green Internationalists, they had, in their various countries, a brief but valuable experience as factors in modern democratic political life. They forced the bourgeois-military elements to yield to their demands for great agrarian reforms; then, going farther, tried to get hold of direct power—and failed.

In 1922 Stambuliski became Premier of Bulgaria and with Radich, who was swiftly forging ahead in Jugoslavia, started to work for a great federation of Balkan peasant states. Foreign financial and diplomatic-military interests in the Balkans, however, would not stand for any such statesmanship; Radich and Stambuliski were incorruptible, and, as passionate Slavs and Green Internationalists, inclined more to Russia than to Western capitalist powers. So, in 1923, the militarists of Sofia, in league with the Macedonian bandit-politicians, and with the moral and financial support of the foreign interests in the Balkans, murdered Stambuliski and five of his ministers. Then, with continued foreign support, notably Italian, the same gang proceeded to liquidate by murder all the village leaders of the Stambuliski movement, till by 1925 the number of their killings reached 25,000. They thus destroyed the best peasant political machine ever created and have remained in power ever since.

In 1930 King Carol was allowed (in fact, urged) to return to the Rumanian throne chiefly because Green Internationalism and Communism were spreading through that country and Western (especially French) militarists and finance imperialists no longer trusted anyone else there. Like Jugoslavia's Alexander, Carol is a capable military man, an intrigant and terrorist.

The Hungarian revolution in the early 1920's, supported by the proletarian and landless masses, was put down with the aid of outside forces, and Hungary has been a feudal-military dictatorship ever since. In 1922 Polish peasants elected the speaker of the Parliament in Warsaw; whereupon the Western powers, munition interests and money imperialists lined up behind Pilsudski and company, and Poland became a dictatorship. In Czechoslovakia, as in Austria, "democracy" is allowed. The upper and middle classes there naturally oppose the Greens as well as the Reds, and such very capable bourgeois politicians as Benes can be trusted to play the considerable industrial proletariat—on the whole better treated in Czechoslovakia than in Jugoslavia or Poland—against the peasantry, thus annulling the potency of each.

In all the countries save the two last-named, peasants are variously estimated to be from 75 to 95-percent anti-regimist; I know the latter percentage is true in Jugoslavia and Bulgaria; and this includes also numerous ex-peasants in the cities: professional and small business people, most students, priests and workers and (secretly) many government employees and even army officers. But different forms of terror keep them down. In all these seven lands the depression is terrific and, with the currently intensified economic nationalism of the Western industrial countries on which they depend to buy their agricultural products, it is certain to continue. In most of them terror has been the rule for the last five or ten years; in all of them the depression is from two to four years old—and all this time the peasants' wits have been sharpened by both the terror and the crisis. They remember the early 1920's, when they had a strong taste of political effectiveness; and now they are meeting secretly, thinking, whispering about Russia, reading underground literature, listening to secret agitators, both Green and Red.

Their big leaders of ten years ago are murdered or in prisons or exile, their parties outlawed, their political machines largely destroyed, their publications forbidden, but in villages the "Green idea" today is numerically stronger than ever.

Moreover, as a reaction to terror and the depression, Communism has spread through the villages almost as much as in the cities, which now are veritable strongholds of suppressed extreme leftism. In the Balkan states, perhaps, two-thirds of the peasants have more or less intense political convictions and aspirations, and they appear about evenly split into Greens and Reds or potential Reds. The Greens are mostly peasants who still own property and believe the only way to save themselves is to make their countries into mild socialist-peasant states within a great peasant federation or alliance. Many of the Communists are the more intelligent pauperized village people who would lose nothing if Communism came; others are are ex-Greens who hold that if Radich and Stambuliski were still living they would be out-and-out Bolsheviks: for the current Balkan situation is like that of pre-war Russia, and the only salvation then for Russia was what happened in October, 1917.

Next to the masses of uneducated but, on the whole, not unintelligent peasants, perhaps the most important element, from the point of view of the future, are the students—in most countries mainly peasant boys, and from 40 to 80 percent of them Green Internationalist and Communist, but largely Communist. They are now the principal agitators in the villages.

Last spring, as I say, Jugoslavia was on the verge of upheaval. Belgrade buzzed with rumors. Alexander was on the point of abdicating. A new world war seemed imminent; and, after I gained their confidence, peasants told me that if Belgrade called them to arms, no matter against whom, they would not fight but would turn against their commanders as quickly as possible.

Since then the situation has changed considerably.

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The Four Power Pact, signed mainly because of the widespread disposition to revolution, makes a new war improbable in the next few years. As a result of the Four Power Pact, Mussolini no longer has any urgent use for the Sofia Macedonian-bandit government; so the probability is that the Macedonian bandits, receiving no further loans from Italy to maintain their terror organization, will soon be out.

There already is some loosening up in the various dictatorships. Terror continues, but is less severe. In Austria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary matters are momentarily worse because the threat of Nazi aggression has caused the Western powers to put on the screws. On the other hand, Poland, Rumania, Jugoslavia and Bulgaria have more liberty than at any time for years.

I believe that, unless the general European situation again changes drastically, "the élite," *i. e.*, the more decent, personally honest and liberal bourgeois politicians (some of them now in exile), will be given a chance within the next few years to show what they can do. The pressure from below will force them to take on a radical program, but they will be unwilling or unable to go much further Left than Green Internationalism—and, in my opinion, will not get very far with that. The Green program is much too half-heartedly socialistic. Its principal aim is to save the small landowning peasant from big-business exploitation, but it does not include a break with Western capitalism. Hence every Green government will inherit the whole financial mess created or augmented in recent years by the dictatorships, which have contracted foreign debts beyond their capacity to pay. These debts will be a constant drain on the economic power of these industrially backward countries and will prevent them from creating their own industries, which might absorb at least part of the human surplus in the villages.

This, I think, will have a disillusioning effect on the millions of Green peasants and push them still further Left. The political struggle will be increasingly in favor of Communism, especially if the experiment in Russia will show signs of success, as it does this year. The élite-Green politicians will begin as leftists, but such circumstances as I have suggested will inevitably drive them to the Right, to some weak form of fascism: or else force them to quit and let the Communists, who have a complete program, take charge.

At the moment it seems to me that in twenty years or so most of eastern Europe and the Balkans will be part of the U.S.S.R.; and much sooner if Western capitalist powers do not avoid a new world war in that period. All those countries are being pushed in that direction by economic forces and conditions which I have tried to describe. In addition, Poland, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia and Czechoslovakia are pulled that way by the masses' half-mystic, half-realistic Pan-Slavism, which verges upon fanaticism.

LOUIS ADAMIC.

The Milk Strike

THE MILK strike reached its highest point of intensity in a part of upstate New York where I had spent many summers in my youth and which I have always known as the quietest spot on earth. So when I heard of the disturbances up there, I went up to see what was going on. I had read in the New York City papers about ruffianly bands of marauders, not natives or even farmers and, according to Hamilton Fish, under the leadership of Communist agitators, who prowled about the country dumping milk, poisoning wells and destroying property. What I found were simply the Lewis County farmers whom I had known all my life and who, though they railed against "the capitalists," were indignant at being called Communists.

They were, however, extremely aroused. I have never seen such furious feeling in any industrial strike. The industrial workers of the towns are used to having their standards of living forced down and then, when they try to rebel, having the police called out against them. They have evolved their organization and their strategy; they are not surprised by bullets or clubs. But the farmers of upstate New York have never been clubbed before.

They struck before, in 1920, but there was no violence and they won their demands. Lately, their condition has become unbearable. With debts and mortgaged farms, they have been dragging on year after year, unable to produce a profit and compelled to live on their savings. They have recently been made indignant, rightly or wrongly, by having their herds condemned and taken away from them, as the result of tuberculosis tests. They now find themselves getting less for their milk than it costs them to produce it.

They had hoped for relief from the Pitcher Bill, framed by a man from upstate; but they say that by the time it was passed, the Legislature, under the influence of the distributors, had taken all the teeth out of it. A milk board was set up, but it has lost its prestige because the farmers believe it to be dominated by the distributors. It immediately rejected the demand of the farmers to establish a minimum price for milk at the farm and instead pegged, for fluid milk and cream only, a minimum price at the milk stations—the "surplus," that is, the milk in excess of the fluid demand, to be

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paid for at lower prices. This surplus is about half the farmer's output. It is made into butter, cheese, powdered milk and ice cream. The farmers claim that they have been swindled on this surplus—that they have no means of checking up on how much milk the distributors actually sell as fluid and how much they put into the secondary products. They believe that the distributors make a practice of paying them for their milk at the lower prices and selling it to the consumer at the higher, and that the classification of the different kinds of milk destined for different purposes has intentionally been made very complicated so that the farmers cannot find out what has been done. The milk board had announced that it depended on the inspectors and on public opinion to keep the milk companies from cheating the farmers—to see that when the price to the consumer was raised, the farmer got his share of the increase. But the price to the consumer went up, and the farmer was as poor as ever.

The independent farmers had been organizing under the leadership of Albert Woodhead, of Rochester, president of the Empire Milk Producers' Protective Association and of the Western New York Producers' Association, who is reported to have said: "The farmers may yet have to lick this nation into prosperity," and of the Piseck brothers, two Polish farmers of Newport; and on May 12 they threatened to strike. The Western farmers, under Milo Reno, had also declared a strike; but on May 13, Mr. Reno, who had been summoned to Washington and begged by Mr. Roosevelt to be patient in deference to the administration's farm-relief program, called the strike off. The same day, the New York Milk Board added a cent to the price for which consumers could buy milk in New York City; and the farmers of New York State were also persuaded to be patient and give the Milk Board a chance. The Milk Board gave solemn promises that it would try to make the distributors be good. It fined and revoked the licenses of a few milk dealers who had been found guilty of underselling, and the news was joyfully featured in the front pages of the papers upstate; and it intervened to prevent Sheffield from getting away with the brazen device of postponing payment to the farmers. But still the farmers seemed to get nothing out of it except the complicated bookkeeping of their check-stubs, which always proved that their prospective profits were leaking away through the aperture of the "surplus." In July, the price of milk to the consumer went up another cent and the check-stubs still remained the same. The farmers' savings were all used up: there were families who were actually starving. The drought this summer, which has burned the pastures brown, came as the last straw. Woodhead and the Pisecks went from town to town, writing up the milk statistics on a blackboard: they showed that in the Middle West where the retail price of grade B milk was ten, nine and eight cents, the farmers were getting a higher return than in New York where the retail price was twelve cents; and that the New York dealers were now getting two and a quarter times as much for distributing as the farmers got for producing the milk. A meeting was called at Utica and representatives of some 50,000 independent producers voted to strike on the morning of August 1, ceasing to deliver their milk to the dealers. They demanded for the farmer forty-five cents on the consumer's dollar.

The strike was put into effect, and the farmers not only kept their milk at home but picketed the plants and dumped the milk of farmers who tried to deliver. Oneida County was at the core of the strike and the farmers in the neighborhood of the little city of Boonville had been among the most active. The authorities apparently decided to make an example of Boonville, and state troopers were sent there Monday night. About 10:30 on Tuesday morning, a crowd of some three hundred farmers and spectators gathered along the road outside the town, waiting for a truck headed for Sheffield's. They had a long board with spikes ready to lay across the road. The troopers came out in their cars and marched down between the lines of the crowd, who, never having done picketing before, regarded themselves as free to make fun of them. The troopers, encountering this insubordinate spirit, marched back again to their cars and, to the continued amusement of the crowd, put on gas masks and steel helmets and armed themselves with sub-machine guns, gas bombs and riot sticks. The people had never seen sub-machine guns and didn't know what to call them. The troopers have asserted since that they ordered the pickets to disperse, that no movement was made to obey and that someone threw a stone; but it was impossible to find anyone among the Boonville people who would corroborate this. At any rate, the troopers set upon the crowd, shooting gas bombs at them and clubbing them, old and young, men and women alike. They pursued people into fields and woodsheds, beat them over the heads when they got stuck in the barbed-wire fence. I saw many broken heads and bruises. There was one man who had had a gas bomb fired point-blank into his back, injuring him severely and setting his clothes afire. The troopers yelled at the farmers that they were sons-of-bitches, Reds, rats; the people thought they must be drunk. That the crowd was unarmed on this occasion is proved by the fact that they ran away and that the troopers were not hurt.

I have never before seen a whole community so shaken by anger and horror. Nothing like this had ever happened to them, and the result was exactly the opposite of what the authorities had contemplated. "They thought they'd teach 'em a lesson," someone said, "but they only made 'em fierce!" Four days afterwards, the troopers were escorting another milk truck near the town of Oriskany. They were led by their commander, a Captain McGrath, who was asserted by the Boonville people to have been present at the previous

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attack, but who denied this, declaring, when questioned, that he did not know who had led the state troopers that day. This time the farmer-pickets were prepared for them: they had axe-helves, pick-handles and stones. Though they came away with many wounds of their own, they stoned the troopers so effectively as to send five of them to the hospital, including Captain McGrath. Captain McGrath had been the officer in command in putting down the prison revolt at Auburn; and one of the sayings of the farmers got to be: "This is no prison revolt!" Oriskany already had a battlefield made famous by a fight between the revolutionary army and the Tories and the Indians in 1777, and people got to referring to the encounter with the troopers as the "Battle of Oriskany." A correspondent in The Rome Sentinel was talking about the Battle of Lexington.

In this region, unlike some of the Western communities, there is no split between the country and the town. The merchants, dependent on the farmers' trade, are 100-percent with the strikers. Here is a protest to Governor Lehman signed by a "Committee of Boonville Business Men": "We, the business and professional men of Boonville, having witnessed the medieval atrocities perpetrated today by your brutal state troopers against the best citizenry of America, do protest and demand that you take immediate steps to remove these brutes from our midst and rectify a condition that should never have existed in connection with the milk holiday." The Kiwanis signed a similar protest. The Jewish citizens of Boonville, of whom there were, I was told, only two, sent the Governor an appeal of their own, as there was a theory that the indifference of the Jewish Governor must be due to his solidarity with the Jewish milk distributors in New York. It was strange to find The Boonville Herald and Adirondack Tourist, which, with its immemorial cut of a stag's head, a rifle and a creel, I have never in all the years I have seen it, known to chronicle anything but the peaceful affairs of a pastoral community, publishing denunciations of "Cossacks" and "half-crazed thugs" and bulletins on local battles.

The editor and other prominent citizens, unable to believe that the brutality of the troopers could be known to or backed by the authorities, went down themselves to Albany and appealed to the Governor for an investigation. The Governor sent Major Warner, the chief of the state police. Major Warner, they told me, arrived in town without allowing his presence to be known, entered the hotel by the back door—there was a crowd standing around in front of it—and interviewed his own troopers. When the citizens insisted on his seeing one of the men who had been beaten up the day of the battle, he listened to what the man had to say and grimly replied that if they hadn't enough troopers he would send them forty or fifty more—which he did. He also appointed to conduct an inquiry the Captain McGrath who had asserted that he didn't know who had led the charge at Boonville and who had afterwards been sent to the hospital by the rocks of Oriskany Falls. The citizens demanded of the Governor that Major Warner be suspended from his office of chief of police and that some person not actually injured in the battle be appointed to conduct the inquiry. The bitterness was increased when it was announced that not only would Captain McGrath conduct the inquiry but that he would conduct it behind closed doors without admitting even the New York press, instead of, as had been said at first, holding it in public.

In the meantime, the situation between the state troopers and the farmers had been getting more and more tense. The farmers picketed the milk plants and dumped the milk. I saw one man who had been up five nights at a plant where the troopers had just scalded the pickets with a hose full of hot water, and who was literally foaming at the mouth—the first time I had ever seen this phenomenon. One old man who had been chased by the troopers took his stand on the railroad track and shouted that he owned stock in the railroad and that the troopers couldn't touch him on his own property. The farmers ambushed the big milk tanks that were being sent down from the north and punctured them with rifle balls, and they fired on the cans in the milk-trains. They put kerosene in the milk and dynamited the milk-houses of farmers who refused to join them; and in the case of one man who owned a herd of prize cattle and who by reason of his attempts to discourage the strike was suspected of being in the pay of the enemy, they drove his cattle away and, according to rumor, cut their tails off.

This last was a great joke at the strikers' meetings, which took place out in the open every afternoon. Their leaders would speak from a truck. It was not in the least like an industrial strike: there were no trained speakers and no one from the outside. There was a more desperate rage underneath—no gaze can look so fierce as the clear and steady eye of a farmer—and a more jocular and easy-going surface. I remember the fixed warlike grin of one boy who was trying to salvage his truck, used in picketing the night before and wrecked by the troopers—they had smashed the windshield, broken the steering wheel and, lifting up the hood, systematically put out of commission all the important parts inside. The troopers had gotten the best of it because they had guns where the farmers only had clubs. The women churned their milk into butter with electric washing-machines and sometimes took part in the battle with pop bottles and bricks.

The Governor, reluctant to call out the militia—which would certainly have been a signal for civil war—instructed the sheriffs to appoint deputies. But the sheriff of Oneida County pointed out that in an attempt to eliminate jobs, it had been provided that the sheriff in that county should pay deputies out of his own pocket. The Ways and Means Committee of the Board of Supervisors refused to appropriate funds for this purpose. "I wonder," said one of

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them, "what the farmers would say if we spent the money they pay in taxes for deputies to fight them." It had made the farmers particularly indignant to reflect that the troopers, maintained by their own money, were really "the farmers' hired men." The truth was of course that comparatively few people were eager to serve as deputies even if the sheriff wanted to appoint them. Governor Lehman had to make haste to get a bill through the New York State Legislature providing funds to obtain deputies in Oneida County.

The Governor attempted also to induce the New York State Legislature to investigate the Milk Board; but the Republicans passed the buck back to him and told him to deal with the matter himself. Then the rotogravure supplement of the Sunday papers printed a picture of the Governor calling on the President at Hyde Park—Roosevelt looking up at the camera with his usual alert affability and Lehman bending forward toward the President in an attitude of flattered acquiescence. And though the Governor refused to treat with the farmers till the strike had definitely been called off, some kind of assurances were evidently given, for the Pisecks finally gave the signal to begin delivering milk again.

In spite of the fighting spirit of the farmers, one came away gloomy from the milk strike. The habit of self-dependence which makes the farmer willing to fight makes him indisposed to organize. A strike like the recent one could be broken by the importation of milk from other states even if, as is by no means the case, the farmers of New York were unanimous. "A young fellow came in here the other day," said the proprietor of a little upstate hotel with rifles on the walls of the barroom and a veritable museum of stags' heads with hats hanging cockeyed on their antlers—"A young fellow came in here and he said to me: 'Why should we go in with Boonville? Why should we help Boonville?' I said to him: 'Do you remember last winter when the hotel caught afire and like to burned down, and the Boonville fire department came over and put out the fire? And then you ask, Why should we go in with Boonville?' " "Yes!" declared another man, moved by the new solidarity, "people in Boonville are just as human as they are anywhere else!" Where it requires an effort of magnanimity to coöperate with the people of the next town, it is difficult to convince anyone who for the time being may be enjoying a slight advantage that his interests in the long run are identical with those of his less fortunate neighbors.

Farmers in this area say that the great obstacle to their prosperity is today the Dairymen's League, which was started as a farmers' coöperative association, but which they believe has been turned into an instrument by which Borden's is able to control and cheat the producer. "I don't know why anybody should want to shoot those tanks," said one of the leaders at a strikers' meeting. "The farmers' money paid for 'em—you're destroying your own property." But the tanks, which have the troopers to protect them, are no longer the farmers' property. They belong to the Dairymen's League, but the farmers complain that they no longer have any power over the activities of the Dairymen's League, that it owes them $27 million and has ceased even to submit to them an annual report. What chiefly sapped the effectiveness of the strike was the continued shipment of milk from St. Lawrence and Jefferson Counties, where the League was the dominant power.

Yet the authorities are doing what they can to force solidarity on the farmers. "When a respectable farmer," says The Utica Daily Press, "goes into a country store to buy a pair of shoes, with his feet wrapped in burlap sacking, it is surely time to realize that we have not yet accepted the notion of having the countryside inhabited by peasants." But the farmers are beginning to feel hopeless of help from the outside world to save them from the burlap sacking which matches the wooden shoes: they feel that the city is indifferent to them, they accuse Lehman of owning stock in Borden's; they do not trust their own representatives. There is only the chimerical smile of Roosevelt, and that is so far away, hovering on the horizon; while what they have directly in front of them is the countenance of Captain McGrath—that peculiar phenomenon of American life which has come to figure so prominently since the War, the military policeman—sitting down behind closed doors in the Boonville hotel to pass judgment on his own underlings and himself.

EDMUND WILSON.

Steeltown in Ferment

ALMOST any evening in the week, driving through the mill towns of the Monongahela or Allegheny Valleys, in western Pennsylvania, one is bound to run into a mass meeting. Sometimes it is in an empty lot. Here the overflow generally extends to the highway, the neighborhood roofs or the idle freight cars, if the meeting, as is often the case, is held near a railroad. If it is held in a hall, one sees men hunched on steps, crowded along the curb or holding on to near-by telegraph poles. There is not enough room inside. One stops to inquire what is going on. Pretty soon it becomes unnecessary to inquire. One knows. It is an organization meeting. The Amalgamated is organizing another lodge. "This is a meeting of the Nira lodge," a worker informs you. The Nira? It sounds interesting. One soon discovers a whole repertory of these highly modernistic lodge names employed by the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers. Among these are New Deal, Recovery, Prosperity, Blue Eagle and NRA. It matters little what the name of the lodge is. The men who join them are all steel workers. They are all joining the union.

One listens to a few of the speeches and questions

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the organizers who make them. They are the same at all the meetings. But the crowds they speak to are always new. At Homestead, McKeesport, Clairton, Canonsburg, Brackenridge, Apollo, in every town, from every mill, they turn out to listen to organizers and to sign on the dotted line. The organizers are nearly all members of the United Mine Workers. The steel union has been dead too long; it has no organizers of its own. But the pick and shovel are not far removed from the steel furnace. The miners speak in simple, direct terms and the steel workers understand their language.

"If you want to enjoy real freedom, and feel that you are just as good a man as your boss, join our ranks and reap the benefits to be obtained thereby. . . .

"Get that fear out of your hearts that you will be discharged for joining a labor organization. Section 7 of the N.I.R.A. gives you that right and it also provides a penalty for the companies who coerce or intimidate their workers. . . .

"If anyone has been fired or called on the carpet for joining the union, come right up to this platform and give us your name. We will send it to General Johnson and he will put that boss in jail for six months and fine him $500 besides."

The speakers soon fall back on the miners' organization. They feel more at home in it. "Six months ago," the speaker shouts, "the U.M.W. in this district had only 800 members. Today it has 122,000." Grand applause. "Will you men stand in the way of progress?" he asks. A chorus of NO's thunders back at him. "If you get in trouble, 122,000 miners stand behind you." The grand applause is repeated. "But if you don't join the union, 20,000 of us miners will come down here and make you join." Stamping of feet supplements the applause.

At this stage confidence runs high and the speakers become defiant. "We know there are spies here." The crowd laughs derisively. "Carry back the tale, we don't care. But tell the truth, not lies."

Neither coaxing nor coercion is necessary. The men who come are ready to sign up. Four years of share-the-work, share-the-poverty, share-the-miserable-rations have well paved the way for a break. What will these men do with their union after they have joined it? What steps will they take to force the adamant U. S. Steel Corporation to accept it? No one knows, least of all the leaders. It is easy to gather that the rank and file are not educated to unionism and merely expect a miracle, probably to be performed by Franklin D. Roosevelt and transmitted to them via the Amalgamated. The leaders have no such illusions. Neither are they looking too far ahead. Their chief immediate concern is to organize, to amass numbers, to build the union. It is, however, evident that they do not take the anti-strike proviso at all seriously. If pressed to it, they will state both publicly and privately that "if it becomes necessary, we will stage the biggest strike this country has ever seen." By this they mean the combined forces of miners and steel workers. There is here a revolution in the making and anyone who can at this time foretell its course deserves to be crowned the seer of the ages.

ROSE M. STEIN.

Washington Notes

Are Wages Rising?—Payrolls and Unemployment —The Cold Hand of Doubt—Setting the Public Works Ball Rolling

REPORTS on factory employment and payrolls from July 15 to August 15 are beginning to reach Washington, and are being read with the same tenseness with which, in wartime, dispatches from the front-line trenches were read at G.H.Q. To the skeptical, often-repeated question, "Has the Blue Eagle, in fact, raised anybody's wages?" it seems now possible to answer, "Yes." No official figures will be read until about the middle of September, but on the basis of incomplete, preliminary returns, it would appear that the average wage return from July 15 to August 15 advanced perhaps 6 percent.

Whether this 6-percent increase is to be regarded as satisfactory or not, depends on your conception of the function of the Blue Eagle campaign. I have talked to numbers of N.R.A. brass hats, and have received widely varying answers. First, however, I ought to explain that the term "average wage return" is regard as a useless abstraction in the N.R.A., and is seldom used. Instead, what is discussed is the relationship between total employment and total payroll payments. If payroll payments rise faster than the advance in employment, it is presumed that someone, somewhere, is getting higher wages. For purposes of N.R.A. grand strategy, the exact percentage of increase of a hypothetical "average wage" is immaterial.

Since last March, N.R.A. officials have watched employment and payroll totals with anxious care. The actual figures are extremely interesting. For the month ending April 15, the first full monthly period under the Roosevelt administration, employment rose 1.6 percent, and payrolls 4.5 percent. Payrolls, it will be noticed, rose nearly three times as much as employment. Obviously there must have been some workers, somewhere, who received increased pay. For May, employment went up 4.8 percent, and payrolls 11.5 percent. Again, the payroll increase was almost three times the increase in employment, indicating that higher wages were still continuing. However, in June, employment advanced 7 percent, compared with an advance in payrolls of 10.8 percent. Increases in average earnings evidently were slowing down. Finally, in July, the advances in employment and payrolls were almost identical. Employment rose 7.3 percent, and payrolls 7.9 percent. It was thus clear that pay increases, after advancing at a relatively rapid rate during April and May, probably in most cases because of longer hours worked, and after dropping back in June, had in mid-July virtually ceased.

It is against this background that N.R.A. officials view

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the reports now coming in for the July-August period. Rough estimates place the advance in employment for this period at about 5 percent, and the advance in payroll totals at nearly 12 percent. You will observe immediately that the increase in payrolls is once more far greater than the increase in employment. Wages would appear to be once again on their way upwards. Is this, or isn't it, a first victory for the Blue Eagle?

Unfortunately, I must report that N.R.A. authorities differ. Among the N.R.A. laity, the disposition is to accept this rising trend unhesitatingly, as a natural, predestined result of the Blue Eagle codes. But among the professional economists of the N.R.A., you discover considerable suspicion. It is feared, for one thing, that when complete figures are available, they will be found to be unduly weighted by the summer's forced, abnormal activity in the cotton-textile industry. During the whole of this July-August period, the textile industry was running close to capacity in anticipation of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's cotton-processing tax. Now jobbers are reported to have stocks on hand sufficient for months to come, and it is probable that the textile industry will soon face a great slackening in both wages and employment.

However, this question of the textile industry is a relatively minor technical point. Everyone in the N.R.A. will agree that wage scales are at least holding firm, and that competitive wage cutting seems definitely ended. Everyone likewise is ready to agree that trends in wage rates, and in total employment and total payrolls, generally are upwards. The really wide divergence of opinion in the N.R.A. concerns a much more fundamental issue. Granting that the Blue Eagle campaign, for the July-August period, succeeds in making the utmost gains hoped for it, can these gains be considered sufficient? Has not the Blue Eagle definitely failed to achieve the large results which many N.R.A. members, and millions of Americans, looked forward to?

There is, unquestionably, an attitude of doubt around the N.R.A. offices nowadays. However, the soundest N.R.A. economists believe the Blue Eagle is doing all that could reasonably be expected of it. To hope that the Blue Eagle campaign would by itself lift us out of the depression is, according to them, absurd. The true economic function of the Blue Eagle, in their minds, is not to make gains at all, but to hold gains already made. When the policy of the N.R.A. was being formulated last spring, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the Department of Labor submitted estimates to show that, in all probability, there were at least 3,500,000 workers in manufacturing industries who could not be reabsorbed into their old jobs. Chiefly this was because of technological advances made since 1929. To give a recent example, the July, 1933, production of automobiles was almost exactly double that of July, 1932, but according to Department of Labor figures, employment increased only six-tenths of one percent. The potential danger of these 3,500,000 workers whose jobs had vanished, so to speak, in thin air, was repeatedly emphasized during the drafting of the N.R.A. program. It was pointed out that they would constitute a great pool of starvation labor, and unless adequate safeguards were devised, would inevitably undermine any wage-and-hour standards the N.R.A. attempted to set up. The Blue Eagle and the individual N.R.A. codes form the safeguards which have been erected. No employed worker, however hungry he or she may be, can now legally be employed at less than N.R.A. standards. The labor market has now a legally fixed base, below which labor costs cannot be deflated.

As The New Republic editorially stated last week, only governmental spending on a grand scale is likely to bring about rapid recovery. We need a greatly speeded-up public-works program; probably, if recovery is to come soon, the administration will have to resort to direct subsidies to existing businesses, as it has already done in the case of farmers, shipbuilders and aircraft manufacturers. It is doubtful whether much of the economic improvement we have so far achieved is due, in any direct way, to the Blue Eagle; probably the greater part of it is the consequence of the cessation of currency hoarding and the summer's wheat shortage. However, it is certainly true that the Blue Eagle, by guaranteeing comparative stability of mass purchasing power, has created the indispensable base upon which all other plans for recovery must be founded.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Uncle, Can You Spare a Million?—The Union Bust Company—Cash for Working Capital —The High Price of Votes

THERE is something to soften a heart of stone in the spectacle of the haughty and majestic Mr. Arthur Curtiss James chasing about trying to scrape up a pitiful loan of a mere million bucks. Mr. James, so little known to the vulgar mob, is one of those stockholding giants who, through the ownership of at least a hundred millions in railroad securities, has, from his beautiful yacht, the "Aloha," exercised a potent dominion over American railroad fortunes. He is chairman of the board of the Western Pacific Railroad. That company owes a trifle of a million dollars' interest, which at this writing is due in a few days. The R.F.C. was expected to dig up the money, as it continues to do for various roads. But the Interstate Commerce Commission refused to approve the loan. So now the road's officials are down in Wall Street panhandling the passers-by for the money.

In the dear old Street they are wondering if Uncle Sam is really going to stop paying the bills of the Van Sweringens and Jameses and other railroad promoters whose sway over their roads would have been ended long ago but for the kindly aid of the last administration and this one. Can it be that the government is going to stop interfering in business just when the boys need a little interfering so badly?

Is it not just about time that all this nonsense of saving crazy and cracked railroad capital structures came to an end? Have not the Van Sweringens and others had just about enough relief from the United States government?

All of which brings us to the plight of the banks in Cleveland, which has been lost in the shuffle. Papers outside Cleveland have paid little or no attention to happenings there. If they had we should have learned some

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things about the Cleveland banking situation and the Van Sweringens and their pals which might make us feel that these chaps have had the use of the people's money just about long enough.

Back in January, in an article on the R.F.C., I called attention for the first time to the huge government loans made to the two banks in Cleveland—one of them a bank which had been presided over by the man who became treasurer of the Republican Committee; the other included among its directors Atlee Pomerene, the man who became head of the R.F.C. A little later these two banks collapsed and plenty of other banks with them, and Mr. Pomerene indignantly announced that the failures were the result of the publicity given the R.F.C. loans. But now we are learning something about these two banks. For instance, in December, 1932, before my article was printed, an audit of the Union Trust Company, privately made, called attention to the outrageous condition of the bank as a result of loans to directors, to the Van Sweringens, to Cyrus Eaton and others. Now the liquidator of the bank has filed a report in the Court of Common Pleas in which he reveals that $65 million—or one-third of the bank's assets—was literally buried in mortgage loans; that one of the directors had loans of $3 million; that the directors and officers and other Cleveland bank officials had loans totaling $10 million; that the Van Sweringens had loans of $10 million; that Cyrus Eaton and his two predatory investment trusts, exposed in The New Republic in 1930, had over $10 million; that the affiliate of the Union Trust had another $5 million.

Now the bank is busted. Cyrus Eaton also is busted. But the Van Sweringens keep going, with the aid of millions in loans from the government.

General Johnson demands that the banks lend money to business men. Jesse Jones offers to buy preferred stock in banks in order to supply them with additional funds from the R.F.C. This is all based on the belief that the banks can bring prosperity back by lending money for working capital. There is one flaw in this. What is needed now is not working capital, but fresh supplies of fixed capital. Money is needed for the production of capital goods. This comes, or should come, if we have learned any lessons at all, from long-term indebtedness and not from bank loans. I looked up the record of banks as the country moved up out of the depression of 1920-21. Bank loans did not increase as we started up. On the contrary there were intervals when they actually declined. What did increase, however, were capital issues and mortgage loans for capital investment. It was not until the upward thrust from this expansion in the capital-goods market was established that credit began to expand.

A charge has just been made against the so-called insiders of the Armour Company of Illinois which, it seems to me, cannot well be ignored. A member of the stockholders' committee has charged that Albert H. Wiggin, former chairman of the Chase National Bank, Samuel McRoberts and Arthur Reynolds, all directors of the Armour Company and trustees under a voting-trust agreement, have been getting $100,000 a year each as voting trustees. The duties of voting trustees are rather light. They consist in voting the stock of the stockholders when the election rolls around. It would be interesting to know how many little pickings of this sort are enjoyed by men like Wiggin. He was chairman of the Chase National Bank. At the same time he was a member of the finance committee of the B.M.T. in New York City. For that he got $20,000, in spite of the fact that he was also acting as banker for the road and getting paid in that market too. How many more salaries did Mr. Wiggin get and how many is he still getting? It will be remembered that Mr. Albert Wiggin was the first great banker to come out publicly in a vigorous demand that wages be reduced.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

The Sphinx without a Secret

Oscar Wilde, by C. G. Renier. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 166 pages. $1.50.

THERE may very well be such a thing as the Anglo-Saxon Conscience. It may be that it prevents our sinning. It may be that it prevents our repeating the sin, through pouring suffering and repentance upon us afterward. It may be that it is a way of spoiling our pleasure in the thought of what we have done, or of being superior to other races who forget to regret as much as they should, who may, even, neglect to sin enough to find enough chances for regret. It may be that it only adds to our mental confusion, and to the *perfide* notion that some nations hold of us. At any rate, this seems to me as good a time as any to say certain things that need to be said of Oscar Wilde, of whom one biography after another has a way of appearing.

Oscar Wilde got a heavy penalty for his fault, and that more than anything else, I think, keeps up the bibliographic *libido* on the subject. In the light of what everybody knows of the English public schools, of diverse sovereigns, *et cetera,* there is doubtless a modicum of conscience aroused when the thought of how harshly he was treated comes into the mind. Things that in most European countries are overlooked or regarded as belonging to another field, took on in Wilde's case a vast and frantic importance, and at his trial and condemnation no little popular hysteria underwent a celebration. My notion is, and the point of this review of Mr. Renier's new biography is, that it would be a good thing to let the Freudian scholars exercise themselves on the subject of Oscar Wilde for a time, and to write of him as an author. In a sense, Oscar Wilde is avenged; for almost everything but the literary consumes the attentions of his recorders, so that they appear to skip some of what might be the poverties of his art. He himself wanted to be a writer. He also wanted to know fashionable people, and also to be talked of a great deal. His chroniclers find themselves talking about him a great deal, the subject has a morbid interest and a special succulent curiosity that neither writers nor publishers have been blind to as merchandise.

One cannot say that Mr. Renier's biography of Oscar Wilde is commercial in intent. The writer yet waits who will put the subject over in its full appeal, outdoing the obstetrical novelists in savory and reckless detail and intricate super-knowledge. But one can indicate that in this

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English biography one finds that, besides flitting comments, there are devoted to the Wilde dramas exactly six out of the one hundred and sixty-six pages. That fact should speak for itself.

Oscar Wilde worked to be a London light; he had, like everybody almost, his sincere side. He was fortunate in striking an epoch where his carnations and esthetic discourses seemed noticeably scandalous. His personal tragedy, with its morbid and overdone injustice, left him a lively subject; so that personage after personage recalls the persuasion of his talk, the brilliant cadence of his words, et cetera, et cetera. And on the Freudian side enough exercise in tolerance, hypocrisy, theory, caginess, has been expended to sharpen countless wits. St. Augustine asked, "What can be more deadly to the soul than liberty of error?" Symmachus said, *"Uno itinere non potest pervenire ad tam grande secretum."* And I, in a humbler capacity, merely suggest that, except as trained and candid scholars in the field care to take it up, it is a poor and profitless business to go providing lives of Oscar Wilde.

Our subject, therefore, in spite of this charitable and savory account that Mr. Renier has written, might well be the Wilde drama. In the midst of a vague and drifting course there suddenly came to this London figure, already rather tarnished, a theatre triumph and something like £8,000 a year. This made everything quite another matter, not his debts but the regard, or at least the curiosity, of society and the public consciousness that in criticizing him they were criticizing a success. In 1889 was given in England Ibsen's play, "The Doll's House," just twenty years after its birth on the Continent, and under, I believe, the title of "The Butterfly on the Wheel," or "Breaking a Butterfly," a version in which the last act brought the heroine home again. And in 1891, "Ghosts" and "Hedda Gabler" were produced. There was an outcry in the press and a good deal said that turned on drains and sewers, in Europe a telling simile. At that moment Oscar Wilde came forward with his comedies of modern life. In "Lady Windermere's Fan" there were the familiar tears, but also epigrams and paradoxes. The conversational wit of Oscar Wilde moved into a more general limelight. Afterwards came "A Woman of No Importance," "An Ideal Husband," and finally "The Importance of Being Earnest," which by virtue of its being free of actuality, morality, tears and humanity, is easily the best of the lot, Gauging all these plays now, it is possible to say, I think, that they have small significance of any kind. They lack basis and any genuine creation of life and social scale; they creak. They are already far more *vieux jeu* than some of the fragments of Menander, who died in 290 B.C. The one among them that holds up best, if played in high spirits and with, perhaps, enough parents of the actors in the audience, is the farce of "The Importance of Being Earnest." Of all the Wilde dramas the best is that long since picked out in Europe as best, "Salome." The poetry of "Salome," first written as it was, and as everyone knows, in French, is heavily indebted to the pallors and images of certain French authors. But the play as a whole is convincing in a certain totality of impression. It is decadent and lush, and if the performers of it on the stage are such as can respond to its somewhat obvious morbidities—or shall we say unusualness for grandma?—and if a certain glamorous smear of limelight and insinuation be given to the production, the effect is not only successful, but, after its fashion, haunting. It seems to me the only instance in which Oscar Wilde got anywhere with what he had truly to express; and biting dead lips, and *"vous connaissez mes paons blancs, mes beaux paons blancs, qui se promènent dans le jardin entre les myrtes et les grands cyprès . . . leurs becs sont dorés, et les grains qu'ils mangent sont dorés aussi, et leurs pieds sont teints de pourpre,"* arise from an exquisite and complex culture, if you like, and denote a degree of talent. The fact that "Salome" provided an applauded libretto for an opera speaks a good deal in its favor, though in the light of opera librettos generally one might overstress the point.

What a pity Fielding did not enact some variety of conduct that would prolong the demand for his biographies! Despite the prose style in Congreve, which, in itself at least, is such as neither Molière nor any English comedy writer save Congreve ever achieved, Fielding is easily the greatest, most varied, authentic and virile endowment for a comic theatre that we have had in English; and, for all his dramatic enterprises, the loss of him, through the nature of his epoch more than anything else, to our English theatre is incalculable. But I never saw a life of Fielding in a drugstore, alas!

STARK YOUNG.

Dickens' Sacred Dust

WHEN Dryden rewrote Chaucer, explaining that old Geoffrey was a rough diamond and had to be polished ere he shone properly, his readers applauded; but professors of literature now put a black mark against Dryden's taste, and Chaucer (when they and their students con him over) has relapsed to his own archaic version. Colley Cibber and David Garrick "improved" Shakespeare to suit their box office, but their versions are now more profoundly dead than the original. All these "improvements" of classics were popular in their day, and correspondingly ephemeral. But in England recently, when Robert Graves' version of "David Copperfield" ("The Real David Copperfield"; London: Arthur Barker, Ltd.) was presented to the public, it was greeted with almost unanimous anathema. This reception in itself might be taken as a strong indication that for once a classic has been really improved.

An even stronger indication would have been given by the book itself, if its critics had read it, but apparently few of them got beyond the Foreword; and of those who had read the original, fewer still, apparently, could remember it. Bernard Darwin, Dickens' latest biographer, crowned the absurdity of his fellows when he wrote that the crowning absurdity of Graves' version was in making Mr. Micawber succeed in Australia—an incident which appears in the Authorized Version itself. For those who believed that reverence for authority was dead it must have been a heartening sound to hear the infuriated cackling of the British guardian-geese. America does not take Dickens nearly so seriously; we no longer even pretend to read him, and he has never become, as he has in England, a national institution and consequently sacred. But we know what "classics" are, and we know that Dickens is a "classic." We know that when books die they linger for a while in a purgatorial state of suspense, and then pass on either to limbo or to heaven. If they go to heaven they become classics. They are dead, buried, and no longer read, but they

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are venerated as the holy saints of the literary religion, and superhuman legends gather round them and clothe them in raiment white and glistering. In England there are still a great many bigots of this old-time religion: men who no longer believe in the literal inspiration of the Bible still believe passionately in the literal inspiration of Dickens. When the late Sir Harry Johnston, the African explorer and scientist, wrote a continuation of "Dombey and Son," he was considered to be treading on dangerous ground, but not actually committing trespass. Mr. Graves has not only broken down the fence, but has attempted to establish a public right of way (the English version of the sin against the Holy Ghost) through a national shrine.

What possessed Mr. Graves to do such a thing? The question should be, rather—granted the patience and the ability, why has no one done it before? Why Dickens wrote "David Copperfield" in the first place may have remained a mystery even to the author; but why a writer should itch to revise it is easy to see. It is a very good book, with some very bad stuff in it. In "David Copperfield" Dickens "had a story to tell in which, for once, he felt personally committed to the truth. He began with the intention of letting it take its truthful course and . . . did keep it honest, though diluted, for quite a third of the way." Dickens wrote the book in twenty monthly parts and, far from working to any preconceived plan, seldom looked more than a couple of instalments ahead. As Mr. Graves moderately says:

> This hand-to-mouth trick . . . strongly prejudiced the essential unity of what he wrote. He was obliged to make his characters reannounce themselves month after month by repetitive tricks of speech, humors of character or physical peculiarities which were bound to read most wearisomely when the monthly parts were assembled into a book. Also he could not go back on what he had already written, however embarrassing a hastily composed chapter might prove . . . And then there was the temptation to economize in inventive effort by diluting. Dickens diluted continuously. At least a quarter-million of the half-million words in "David Copperfield" add nothing to the story.

In short, as everybody who has read him will admit, Dickens can stand a good deal of cutting. But Dickens has been abridged before, and nobody cried blasphemy; it is quite true that most people who have read "David Copperfield," "Nicholas Nickleby" or "Oliver Twist" have read them only in a juvenile abridgment. What Mr. Graves has done, however, is more than merely cut away adipose tissue and supernumerary tear-glands: in order to shorten the length without sacrificing the continuity he has rewritten the whole book. His version is "not an abridgment for schools, but a rewriting for the ordinary reader"; and therein lies his crime. But none of the famous scenes or dialogues or characters is lacking. In fact, you cannot tell what is lacking until you read the chapter of the original which Mr. Graves has appended as contrast with his own version. Then you will see that what is missing will never be missed. If you were to read "The Real David Copperfield" without knowing that impious hands had been laid on it, your inevitable comment would be: "I had forgotten what a good book 'David Copperfield' is!"

For Dickens was guilty of other Victorian foibles besides his economically enforced diluteness: an extreme moral prudery, a servile acquiescence in the divine right of class, a "circumstantially pathetic vein"—all of which Mr. Graves has resolutely cut down to their rightful size and squeezed back into their proper organs. The uninfuriated but interested reader may well ask: With what pattern in mind? Mr. Graves' answer is that "every novel, or at least every novel written by an individual author rather than by a general formula, has its own natural length . . . as distinct from the length that the author consents to give it . . . its own natural plot, as distinct from the plot that the author consents to give it . . . " I think Mr. Graves is perfectly right; the only question is, Who shall be the judge? If we are to take posterity's decision (and we are posterity at present, in Dickens' case) then posterity has decided that Dickens is a "classic"—that is, unreadable but perfect. I agree with Mr. Graves (and, possibly, with a posterity still to come) that that is a less lively fate than Dickens deserves. But about taste there should be no dispute, and among those who have it, there is none. Whether or not Mr. Graves' modified Dickensian example will prove his theory must be left to those who know themselves qualified to judge. One serious error he was certainly guilty of, when he concluded: "No apologies are offered for tampering with a reputed classic, and few, I think, will seriously demand them." Mr. Graves overestimated his countrymen's intelligence as much as he underestimated their patriotism.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

Labor and the N. R. A.

[*We summarize herewith some of the more important developments of the last few days concerning labor and the N.R.A.*—THE EDITORS.]

BY A POPULAR vote of 10,296 to 3,786, union labor won the first government-supervised plebiscite of workers in a major industry. The poll was held among the hosiery workers of Reading, Pennsylvania, whose strike was successfully settled a few weeks ago through the mediation of the Labor Arbitration Board of the N.R.A. Of the forty-five shops in the Reading hosiery industry, thirty-seven voted for the union, while the remaining eight elected to work under an open-shop policy. Thus as a result of this poll, which was conducted by the National Labor Board under the collective-bargaining guarantee of the Recovery Act, the government will recognize the union as spokesman for the workers in these thirty-seven shops.

According to the latest government estimate, some two million workers have gained employment through the N.R.A.'s efforts. William Green, president of the A. F. of L., points out that this still leaves approximately eleven million unemployed. He insists that the hours of work now being inserted in codes by manufacturers are not short enough to bring about the speedy reabsorption of workers. It is interesting to note in this connection the average hours per week per man which were actually worked in the major industries during June, as reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

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Coal	
Anthracite	31.2
Bituminous	28.5
Crude Petroleum	42.6
Iron and Steel	37.9
Automobiles	40.4
Cotton Goods	49.1
Manufacturing	42.6

Quite clearly, the forty-hour week (with provisions for overtime), which has been written into the great majority of codes and agreements thus far, can have very little effect in bringing about the reëmployment of the idle. As the codes now stand, the workers in nearly every field can take care of a considerably increased volume of business before additional help will be required.

The workers in the Edgewater, New Jersey, plant of the Ford Motor Company have shown considerably more interest in the N.R.A. than has Henry Ford. Taking advantage of the collective-bargaining guarantee, they have organized a local of the United Automobile Workers' Union. Out of 2,000 employees of the plant, about 400 signed up with the union at the first organization meeting.

Strong-arm tactics are apparently being used by the local authorities at Oxnard, California, to prevent sugar-beet workers from organizing and striking. According to the American Civil Liberties Union, "residents have been shanghaied out of town, and strikers have been illegally arrested and beaten up in jail. All this is a conspiracy of the police with the growers to break the strike of the workers." About four weeks ago, several hundred sugar-beet workers, nearly all Mexicans and members of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union, went on strike. While the growers were willing to grant a 12-percent increase in pay, they refused to recognize the union. When the strikers stood firm on this demand, their meeting place was raided and the strike leaders were arrested. In addition, police have attempted to force landlords to refuse permission for workers' meetings anywhere in Oxnard. A complaint that the Recovery Act is being violated has been filed with the local N.R.A.

While the completion of a satisfactory coal code has met with innumerable delays and obstructions, widespread trouble in the mines becomes daily more imminent. Though very little has appeared in the daily press, the miners are intensely restive. In Utah and New Mexico, several thousand are already on strike, demanding better working conditions and union recognition. In Gallup, New Mexico, where the National Miners' Union, a left-wing organization, is taking an active part in the strike, martial law has been declared and the miners have been forbidden to meet. Coal officials and the local government have combined to break the strike and suppress the N.M.U. on the grounds that it is radical and, hence, opposed to the N.R.A. A number of strike leaders have been imprisoned.

Last week Philadelphia saw its worst strike disorder in twenty-five years, when 2,800 strikers and sympathizers at the Cambria Silk Hosiery Mill battled 200 police to prevent strike-breakers from entering the factory. Two union pickets were shot to death by a strike-breaker, and eighteen other persons were injured in the ensuing riot. The strike, which has been marked by other disorders, is over eight weeks' old. The National Labor Board has apparently averted the proposed walkout of 12,000 additional workers in Philadelphia, but the Cambria mill has refused to accept the board's settlement, which involves a free election among workers to determine whether they want union representation. The Cambria employees have joined the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers and demand recognition of the union.

CORRESPONDENCE

The List Is Not Complete

SIR: Thirty-three prominent German citizens have been informed by Adolf Hitler, who only a year ago was a foreigner himself, that their citizenship has been annulled and their property confiscated.

No wonder the Nazi hierarchy does not want to harbor in Germany men who have great followings within their country as well as an international reputation, men who for all these years sought to build and preserve the republic. No wonder they do not want the apostle of international democracy, Heinrich Mann, the politically more courageous brother of Thomas, for in a series of most impressive novels he fought the militaristic era of the Kaiser and in spirited essays he clarified the writing and thought of our day. No wonder they don't want Lion Feuchtwanger, who slipped into political prominence—though never really politically minded or a fighter—by novelizing a Hitler type when Hitler was unbelievably far from power; nor Ernst Toller, the leftist poet and dramatist, who in youthful enthusiasm had joined the ill-fated Munich revolution in 1919, still radical but also a member of the Galsworthian PEN Club until the recent clash at its conference.

No wonder they don't want such excellent newspapermen as Georg Bernhard, editor of the most dignified of liberal papers; Leopold Schwarzschild, editor of Das Tagebuch, a magazine that resembled in many respects The New Republic; Hellmuth von Gerlach, radical pacifist and editor of the outspoken Welt am Montag; or Kurt Tucholsky, who under five pen-names in five-score publications brilliantly satirized and bitterly fought all the remnants of Kaiserism and Potsdamism, and the vanguard of the Third Reich.

Let us omit the Communists among the proscribed, for it is but natural that any party in power would rid itself of the nightmare figures of active opposition: "Red" Ruth Fischer, once candidate for president; Max Hoelz, proletarian general of the Saxon uprising in 1921; Heinz Neumann, middle-class intellectual and once the white hope of his party to become a German Radek; Willy Münzenberg, publisher of a score of papers and magazines and fiery organizer of proletarian auxiliary committees.

But there is Professor Gumbel, twice expelled from the University of Heidelberg because he fearlessly and unfailingly exposed the Black Reichswehr, secret armaments and the wire-pullers behind the innumerable "Feme" murders. These last he recorded in "Two Years' Murder," and "Four Years' Murder," publishing the names of the murderers and bringing to light evidence of the morbidity of the politically half-baked, emotionally confused Weimar republic. Berthold Jacob, who helped Gumbel, was honored with nine months' imprisonment for exposing the "military secrets" of an allegedly disarmed state. Otto Lehmann-Russbüldt, president of the League for Human Rights, has been working in the same direction; he is the author of a book, "War for Profits," which has been translated into English. And last

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but not least, Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster, a pedagogue of international standing and author of many valuable works on the psychological and educational problems of the youth of today. Foerster battled successfully during the War against the militarization of children in the schools, and his pacifist writings did more than any other man's work to spread understanding and peace-mindedness.

No wonder these men have gone.

But why should the Nazis expel from the paradise of the Third Reich men like Scheidemann, who helped the Kaiser and incidentally proclaimed the Republic, a political corpse of long standing and always heartily disliked by the workers; or Rudolf Breitscheid, in his youth a promising economic theoretician, but for many years the "handsome Rudi" who in splendidly tailored dress was always present at Geneva or any other international tea party, a woeful figure for more than a decade; or Otto Wels, lounge-lion among soft-spoken Socialists, responsible for the split of the German Social-Democratic party from the Second International; or even Friedrich Stampfer, who in his Social-Democratic daily, Der Vorwärts, fed the workers with popular astronomy and stories of idyllic home life, while the Nazis marched in military order singing bloodthirsty battle songs. All these men, after all, rather deserved an honorary membership in the ranks of the N.S.A.P., since the dawn of the Third Reich was the inevitable result of their complete estrangement from the restless masses, of their inertia and utter lack of political foresight.

Providence, R. I. F. J. R.

A War Debt Catechism Continued

SIR: Inspired by Mr. Irving Brant's "War Debt Catechism," in The New Republic of August 2, I venture to offer this sequel to it, in spite of the fact that a sequel is almost invariably an anti-climax.

Ann Arbor, Mich. A. R. MORRIS.

[ENCLOSURE]

Q. The $11,000 million was spent here for goods?
A. Yes, we were running about the only shop open for trade, just then.
Q. But the $15,000 million private loans were not spent here?
A. No, most of that went to rebuilding foreign industries and payment of indemnities.
Q. Where did this $15,000 million come from?
A. From war profits chiefly.
Q. Is it true that your war profits created an army of new American millionaires?
A. Not an army, only a Major General's division; we made twenty thousand new millionaires during the War.
Q. Does that twenty thousand measure fairly American war profiteering?
A. Oh no, these are just the little fellows who grew up fast in ten years; they got only the crumbs that fell from the big fellows' table.
Q. These commercial loans of $15,000 million were made by the bankers who got the big money; if the bonds are defaulted the big profiteers lose part of their war gains, do they?
A. Not at all; they sold the bonds.
Q. If these commercial loans are defaulted, the small investor loses?
A. That seems clear.
Q. And if the war debts are defaulted, the taxpayer foots that bill?
A. That also seems clear! unless, of course, we too default on our bonds.
Q. Who holds our government bonds?
A. The banks, chiefly.
Q. You say the taxpayer will foot the bill; who pays the taxes?
A. Ask Mr. Morgan or the man on the street who buys a postage stamp or a loaf of bread or a box of pills.
Q. If the foreign governments don't pay and we little fellows have to, how can we get the money to do it from the men who got the big war profits?
A. You're asking me!
Q. If we cancel the $26,000 million, does that square our accounts?
A. That isn't a question of international finance but a question of technical grammar; it depends upon who "we" are.
Q. We own the country, don't we, and the government too? The Constitution says "We, the people of the United States," doesn't it?
A. Nearly everybody in Europe makes that mistake; I didn't suppose any living American could make it.
Q. If Europe didn't pay for war supplies and reconstruction goods, how did we make our tremendous war profits?
A. They were paper profits; promises to pay; it was a matter of bookkeeping.
Q. Then our twenty thousand new millionaires never were millionaires at all?
A. Only paper millionaires.
Q. Then what have we to show for our war profits?
A. If "we" this time means all of us, we have the world's finest collection of run-down farms, hungry and rugged citizenry, empty skyscrapers, beautiful weed-grown sub-divisions and idle factories, carried on our books at millions and on the market at twenty cents a dozen.
Q. Then where is all the fabulous wealth we made out of the War?
A. There never was any; it was a fable, but a good yarn as long we could believe it.

Extracts from Letters

WILLIAM BEEDIE writes in to say that as a result of Mary Heaton Vorse's article on the Brooklyn consumers' strike, in The New Republic of June 28, he has received many requests for information and literature dealing with the consumers' protest movement against electric-light rates. He asks that all such requests be sent to the National Committee on Utilities and Labor, 128 East Sixteenth Street, New York City.

Franklin E. Walters writes to inform our readers of the opening of the Harlem Workers' School, at 200 West One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Street, New York City. Some of the courses will consider the current problems of the Negroes: Negro revolutionary traditions, fundamentals of the class struggle and allied subjects. Efforts are being made to establish scholarships, to obtain contributions for the school and to build a library of Negro and Latin American literature.

Among the numerous letters we have received on "A War Debt Catechism," by Irving Brant, which we published August 2, is one from F. De F. Winchester of Miami, Florida, who would like to know why the payments of war debts could not be made in foodstuffs and used by this government to feed the people during the depression. Mr. Winchester believes that even if this should hurt business, it would matter little, for business is merely a process which supplies the needs of life. "It appears to my limited intelligence," he writes, "that business has become a game, and that the game is more important than anything else."

Stanley Young sends in a report on working conditions in the automobile industry. In the factory in which he has worked for the past ten years, one of the largest in Detroit, production has recently increased, but the hours were lengthened and the wages per hour reduced. New men were hired, and were paid four and five cents more per hour than the old employees. He believes that this practice, which he has been told is general throughout the industry, is to give the illusion that high wages are being paid, for it will be commonly assumed that if the wages of the new workers are increased, the wages of the old will be correspondingly higher. He also reports many cases of intimidation and unfairness by the foremen as a result of the speeding up of production. In one of the large factories, $1.45 to $1.75 is deducted from the worker's pay every fifteen days for insurance which ceases to be in force when the worker is discharged. The head of the company for which he worked announced a 10-percent wage increase, without adding that it was only to take place the following month when the factory would be closed down and the workers laid off.

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N. I. R. A.

A Primer of "New Deal" Economics, by J. George Frederick. New York: The Business Bourse. 322 pages. $2.

The National Industrial Recovery Act, by John Francis Sullivan, Andrew J. Biemiller and Maynard C. Krueger. Chicago: Socialist Party of America. 16 pages. 5 cents.

Business under the Recovery Act, by Lawrence Valenstein and E. B. Weiss. New York: Whittlesey House. 314 pages. $2.50.

The National Industrial Recovery Act: An Analysis, by Benjamin S. Kirsh, in collaboration with Harold Roland Shapiro. New York: Central Book Company. 156 pages. $2.50.

Labor Relations under the Recovery Act, by Ordway Tead and Henry C. Metcalf. New York: Whittlesey House. 259 pages. $2.

HERE WE have, hot off the presses, in less than sixty days after the law received the approval of the President, four full-blown books and a pamphlet catechism on the National Industrial Recovery Act. Doubtless there are others in process of publication. For weeks pamphlet analyses of this extraordinary statute have been blossoming into print. It seems certain that, whatever the political and economic results of the N.I.R.A. may prove to be, its bibliographical consequences will soak up more printers' ink than any other statute in the history of lawmaking.

It is, of course, much too soon for definitive appraisal of this year's "new deal" legislation. Mature, considered evaluation cannot safely be essayed for many months, perhaps not for many years. This is particularly true of legislation as "delightfully ambiguous" as the N.I.R.A., which is not legislation at all in the familiar sense, but a sweeping grant of power to legislate, tendered to the Executive and the agents chosen by him. Today we can know only sketchily, if at all, what the Act is, let alone what it will do. All this depends upon what men administer it no less than upon how the judges may interpret it.

These up-to-the-minute authors, aware that the time is not ripe for history, give us explanation, interpretation and prophecy. Some of what they give us is good, some of it sloppy and juvenile; much of it bears evidence of hurried composition. Nevertheless, these discussions of the "new deal" legislation should be highly useful to anyone who is interested in its bearings upon the welfare of laborers and business men.

J. George Frederick's "Primer," much the fattest of the five books, is, to my notion, easily the thinnest. The others here noticed are concerned almost exclusively with the Industrial Control provisions of the Act (Title I). Mr. Frederick bites off much more. After surveying the preliminary gropings of humanity from the prehistoric tribal era down through the "periods" to the "new deal" period in the awakening spring of this year, he ranges lightly over the whole Rooseveltian legislative front, not forgetting trade associations, the rubber dollar and the human interest of the "brain trust"! The book seems designed for exhausted business men.

In the judgment of the writers of the Socialist party's compact, intelligent and only slightly doctrinaire pamphlet, the Recovery Act, though "a deliberate attempt to bolster up the profit system," may be made to serve the interests of the workers by the creation under it of strong labor organizations; to them it is state capitalism rather than socialism or fascism, toward either of which it may tend, depending upon how it is administered.

The incalculability of the results of this wholesale grant of power to regulate industry is clearly recognized by the other writers. In "Business under the Recovery Act," Messrs. Valenstein and Weiss, advertising men, deal at some length with the marketing phases of the Act; with merchandising, selling and advertising, especially trade-association advertising, "in the new era." These trade functions will be rationalized and purified under the "business socialism" of the N.R.A. and our "disintegrating industry," rescued from the bootlegger, will be galvanized into new life on a higher plane.

The fate of the business man—especially the big business man—under the codes is also the chief theme of Mr. Kirsh's "The National Industrial Recovery Act: An Analysis." This author is a lawyer who has written extensively on the legal aspects of trade associations, and his new book deals primarily with the prospects of these bodies under the new dispensation. Not forgetting that to stimulate and sustain business activity by putting unemployed workers back to work is the principal purpose of the Act, he gives space to an excellent summary of its labor provisions. (The publishers, I think, are profiteering in pricing this book at $2.50.)

It is with these provisions and with their bearing upon workers and their organizations that Messrs. Tead and Metcalf are concerned in "Labor Relations under the Recovery Act." Recognizing the enhanced importance of group action under the Act, they give a somewhat full explanation of the structure and function of the two types of labor organizations that are competing for recognition: inside (or company) unions and outside (or trade) unions with regional or national jurisdiction. Since it evidently will be the trade associations, rather than individual business concerns, which more and more under the new order of things will represent employers in their negotiations with labor, the authors devote a chapter to them from this point of view. A final section deals with national industrial councils, jointly constituted of trade-association and trade-union representatives for the adjustment of industry-wide issues of labor policy. These councils, of which so far in this country we have only a few isolated examples, the authors expect to become vastly more important.

Messrs. Tead and Metcalf are economists, widely known as authorities on personnel administration and company unionism. Their text on personnel doubtless is the Bible of many labor managers in large steel, oil and automobile companies throughout the country. The position which they now take on inside and outside unions is highly significant. It is that, while the inside union has important functions to perform, those functions are not and cannot be bargaining functions:

> *. . . the person who is to possess the combination of talents needed to meet business managers, effectively, on their own ground must be specially trained for the job and must be in a position where he is not directly dependent upon the management for his support. . . .* A dispassionate examination seems to indicate that the employment of an outside spokesman for the workers in relation to matters like wages and hours, which help to determine the level of an industry's labor standards, is an essential element in bringing an approximate equality of bargaining power into being, as well as in assisting the process of leveling up labor standards in competing companies.

The danger of the N.R.A.'s falling tragically short of its objectives would be greatly minimized, in my judgment, if the labor-manager lieutenants of the big oil, coal, steel and

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automobile men could at this moment induce their chiefs to read and ponder Tead and Metcalf's carefully reasoned argument for the outside union.

One turns from these pioneer evaluations of the N.I.R.A. with mixed feelings of encouragement and apprehension. The authors agree in appraising the Act as a brave and intelligent effort at recovery. That it unquestionably is. They agree in thinking that it cannot be sloughed off in 1935. They seem to agree, finally, in the conclusion that the successful achievement of its purpose remains uncertain. It will benefit the big business men and big business groups, especially the trade associations. It probably will benefit the established trade unions. What it may do to the small business man, to minority unions and to the unorganized worker is something else again.

That it will be able to increase aggregate wage and salary payments faster than retail prices, as it must do to avoid failure, seems unlikely, unless somehow, by strong trade-union pressure and trade-union policing, standards of wages and hours much higher than those so far stipulated in the blanket and other codes can be established in the industries, and unless profits can be kept in check. Whether the requisite trade-union pressure and policing will be forthcoming will depend upon how the collective bargaining clauses of the Act are interpreted, upon the willingness of the open-shop business groups to recognize and deal with outside unions and, not least, upon the degrees of intelligence, energy and resourcefulness exhibited by organized labor. Whether profits can be kept in check will depend upon whether individual profit-seekers are going to be less greedy than many of them have been in the past and upon the possibility that the Roosevelt administration will recognize the need for very heavy taxes upon excess profits and high incomes.

It would appear that the obstacles are somewhat staggering. Nevertheless, one hopes. PAUL F. BRISSENDEN.

Red Front

The Orators: An English Study, by W. H. Auden. London: Faber and Faber. 166 pages. 7s 6d.

Red Front, by Louis Aragon. Translated by E. E. Cummings. Chapel Hill, N. C.: Contempo Publishers. 10 pages. 50 cents, postpaid.

We Gather Strength, by Herman Spector, Joseph Kalar, Edwin Rolfe and S. Funaroff. New York: Liberal Press. 63 pages. 35 cents. Specially bound, $1.

WE ARE in a revolution. Its exact calendar date may not yet have arrived or may be proved to have arrived unnoticed some years ago. But the signs of its presence multiply; and even the conservatives' uneasy postures of defense are given the name of revolutions.

This realization can furnish clues to much that once bewildered us. For example, the eccentric course of modern poetry which, for a time, defied all efforts of reasonable men to search out a reason, can now be plotted almost as sedately as one of The New York Times' business curves. The advocates of small caps, the wreckers of rhyme, the syllable dissectors, the word mergers, all the deformers of traditional poetic structure, were already busy revolutionaries. The flight to the ivory tower was a rebellion against society. The repudiation of sense, the break-up of forms, the loud irreverence toward "realities" had this significance. Poets were in the Nihilist stage of revolution. They occupied themselves so much with form because the problem of content had become insoluble. Since they could not accept the values of the society they lived in, there was no content. It is significant that the experimenting with forms was destructive. What had been heralded as new forms are mostly the pieces of old forms shattered.

The first campaign of the revolution, paralleled in the plastic arts in futurist painting and sculpture, and in prose narrative in the presentation of monstrous personalities, has had a victory. The bourgeoisie has admitted the artist's indictment that life in the society it dominated was without values. Despair and irony, virtually all that there is of content in recent literature, became the guide of conduct of middle-class life. It helped to produce a generation without hope or principle or confident direction, a generation that danced itself to exhaustion, that had lost its morale, cynical, morbid and to an extent masochistically yearning for the blows of the revolution.

We are beyond that now. We are in the midst of the revolution. We all react to it—those most of all, perhaps, who hysterically deny it. We are for it or against it. Cummings writes a book, and it attempts to fight off the revolution with a clumsy caricature of life in Soviet Russia; Archibald MacLeish writes an "Invocation to the Social Muse," pleading for exemption cards for poets from service in the revolution, an appeal to the Young Men of Wall Street to save him from the revolution which the Old Men of Wall Street made necessary, and six poems in praise of America to hearten it in its resistance to the revolution. The esthetic critics try to ignore the revolutionary currents, yet inevitably put in paragraphs of counter-propaganda in their essays. The examples can be multiplied.

On the other hand an increasing number of poets are now deliberately writing revolutionary poetry, and it is the younger of them who are the more successful. The problem is a simple one to understand, though the solution is tremendously difficult to apply. Poetry is undertaking a new subject matter, the experiences of men in a society that is in a state of revolution. The undertaking is for some a heroic one, since it involves the sacrifice of careers to the sheer labor of building up the traditions, the methods of revolutionary poetry.

Mr. Auden's book, "The Orators," reaches America with the reputation of a revolutionary work. The author has joined the Communist party, though his work has been blessed by both the poet laureate and T. S. Eliot. The book illustrates the difficulties of mastering the new theme. It is full of disgust for our decaying social system. It has not advanced far beyond the irony and despair of the preceding generation. It is obscure and personal and serves no revolutionary purpose except to prove how hard the revolutionary poet's task is. Yet it is the work of one of the most gifted young poets of our time and there are ravishing passages, bits of powerful and brilliant diatribe which indicate that in Auden's pen the revolution owns a keen weapon. In fact, the chief defect of the book is its virtuosity. Like a young athlete Mr. Auden displays himself, bewildering his audience by turning from one literary feat to another, dashing from grave soliloquies to doggerel, from orations to parodies, from elegies to Rabelaisian catalogues, from solemn prose to experiments in which a bizarre effect is obtained by changing the vowels in each rhyme. That Mr. Auden is mastering his own capacities is indicated by one of his poems recently printed in The New Republic. This poem, with the simplest means, becomes an exhilarating revolutionary oration.

"Red Front," by Louis Aragon, has had a lively history of its own. Aragon was jailed for writing it and his literary friends, agitating for his release, were rebuked by the French Communist party for raising so much fuss over this

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instance of suppression when they had ignored hundreds of cases of workers arrested in demonstrations and given much worse treatment. Aragon, from his jail, joined in this rebuke and urged his friends to subordinate their individual interests as writers to the needs of the revolution. The incident has divided writers in France, as elsewhere, into a group defending the autonomy of art in any society and a group that considers support of the revolution as the most important function of contemporary poetry. The poem justifies the storm it raised. It has vigorous movement, a superb and scornful rage against the degeneracies of capitalist society, an eloquence that makes use of a powerful rhetoric. It is a translation in high literary terms of the ardent comradeship, the excitement, the anger of a revolutionary demonstration. E. E. Cummings has made a graceful acknowledgment of its poetic value by doing the translation in spite of its revolutionary content.

For Americans the publishing of "We Gather Strength" is an event worth dating. Here are four young writers who are building their careers as poets outside the capitalist publishing apparatus. With but a single exception no poem in this volume has been issued in a commercial magazine. The struggling left-wing literary magazines have provided them their public. Unspoiled by the hope of checks, or by the approval of the polite, they are not only creating a revolutionary poetry but gathering together what will probably be the most responsible and satisfying audience poetry can hope for in our time. We can look forward to something more from their joined strength than from any other group in America. When we compare the poems in this volume with the pieces turned out by "established" poets on such evocative occasions as the Sacco-Vanzetti trial or a miners' strike, we can see at once the difference between the dedication of a life and the fugitive expression of an unrelated, quickly forgotten and self-conscious spasm of indignation.

The four poets in this collection, Herman Spector, Joseph Kalar, Edwin Rolfe and S. Funaroff, have each an individual quality. Herman Spector shows the most abundant rhetorical resources. His use of metropolitan symbols is in itself an achievement, although sometimes a line is flashy and precious and spoils the surrounding lines. A more important drawback is that his poems do not show revolutionary self-confidence and strength. They are to this extent in an obsolete mood—they emphasize dejection, loneliness, defeat, hopelessness, melancholy, suicide.

Joseph Kalar, a writer with vivid sensations, also fails to show the revolutionist in his confident strength. But his anger is stronger, his indignation over the deformities of injustice in a world that might be beautiful is sharper and clearer and has a more heroic accent than in Mr. Spector's poetry.

Because of the aggressiveness of his revolutionary feeling the poems of Edwin Rolfe are to me the most attractive in the collection. In their content and in their manner they give a sensation of forward movement. Mr. Rolfe has a fine word sense. His rhetoric is subtle, individual and effective.

Mr. Funaroff, a poet of real talent, is hampering himself, I feel, by using the "fragmented" technique of the modernists. It is the technique of literary decadence wrongly used, it seems to me, in the poetry of renaissance. A simpler form would suit the content better. The poems would become more direct and more forceful.

Michael Gold's introduction is interesting in its general judgments and sensitive in its appraisal of the individual poets. It is one of those rare introductions which manage to contribute something to the volumes they introduce.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Why Machado Fell

The Crime of Cuba, by Carleton Beals. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company. 441 pages, illustrated. $3.

HAD THIS volume appeared a month or two earlier it might have found a place in the ranks of that contentious literature, represented by Emile Zola's "J'Accuse" and Father Vermeesch's "Question Congolaise," which has made political history. Since it was not published until the week following the overthrow of President Machado's shotgun government, it cannot take credit for that event. But the book does not lose its importance because of its belated appearance. Despite its aggressive nature, it is the best study in English so far published on the Cuban question, and is probably the best book which has come from Mr. Beals' ready pen.

After the manner of a sound Latin tradition, the author does not view the writing of political history narrowly. Before describing the events of the last thirty years, he attempts to analyze the Cuban character, for he wants to know how these people differ from his beloved Mexicans and from his less beloved North Americans. Thus, he explores the influence of Negro culture upon Cuban life, traces the indelible imprint left by Spain and shows how, largely because of the Cuban policy of the United States, the people of this quasi-republic have developed a high degree of irresponsibility. Proud and decent men have played little part in Cuban politics, on account of the control imposed by Wall Street and Washington.

After reviewing the Cuban revolt of 1895 and the Spanish-American War in terms which are not entirely just to Spain or to the Cleveland policy of non-intervention, the author proceeds to trace the history of the Cuban republic. The record is discouraging. The liberty for which Cubans died and for which the United States supposedly fought the war with Spain has become what Mr. Beals calls the "liberty to loot." Cuban governments have stolen from the people openly, while American business men, aided by the Platt Amendment, have absorbed the resources of this island by more subtle means but with equally demoralizing results. He insists that in its Cuban policy the United States has been dominated by a desire for profits rather than for justice. The one contribution of the State Department has been to prevent the people from revolting against the abuses of the dictatorship.

The culmination of this system has been the rule of President Machado. Although Mr. Beals presents many new and revolting details relating to the atrocities of this regime, his most important charge is that President Coolidge and Secretary Kellogg openly consented to the illegal steps by which Machado reëlected himself for a second term in 1928. In return for this support, Mr. Beals charges, Machado agreed to make a "success" of the Havana conference. Now it is true that President Coolidge went to Havana and made a speech glorifying Machado and that the Cuban delegation at the conference brazenly defended the intervention policy of the United States; but this is the first time that a responsible American writer has accused the American government of open collusion in the extension of Machado's rule. If the charge is true, it deserves more detailed documentation than Mr. Beals presents.

His case against the United States would have been stronger had he explored in more detail the workings of the economic system which began with the reciprocity agreement of 1902 and ended (let us hope) with the Chadbourne sugar plan and the Chase loans. In a chapter on American penetration he shows how leading Democrats have

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important connections with Cuban corporations; from this he assumes that Roosevelt's Cuban policy will be the same as Hoover's. He does not give due credit to the liberal economic philosophy of the new administration, which explains why President Roosevelt has allowed a successful revolt to take place in Cuba and why, despite Mr. Woodin's Cuban shares, he is working out a program of agrarian reform. Finally, Mr. Beals advances no constructive solution of the Cuban question. To be really effective a critic must present an alternative to the status quo. In spite of these reservations, Mr. Beals has written an extremely valuable book, interest in which will be increased by the portfolio of Cuban photographs by Walker Evans.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL.

Instinct Is Not Enough

All Men Are Enemies, by Richard Aldington. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

THERE are two distinct plots in Richard Aldington's latest novel, two plots that converge only because Antony Clarendon, "a modern romantic idealist," a sensitive, upper-class Englishman, serves as the hero of both. For almost six hundred pages these two plots wander along like casual acquaintances, now coming together and now separating, one showing Antony as he searches through the mazes of socialism, communism, war, marriage and big business for a meaning for his life; the other tracing his love for Katha, an Austrian girl from whom he is separated by the War. By all rights, the first plot should end on page twenty-seven, where Antony actually discovers a meaning for existence in the simple, pagan life of the senses; it ought to end there because afterwards Antony keeps a closed mind. And the second ought to end about page 300, for it is prolonged by nothing less than a dirty trick; the reader is asked to believe that Antony, searching unremittingly for Katha, would neglect to leave his address with their only mutual acquaintance.

The lack of artistry so clearly shown in the construction of the novel is as clearly revealed by the writing in detail. There are no characters; there are merely mouthpieces and symbols. Even Katha is not a human being; she is simply the Natural Sensuous Woman, appearing only in love scenes which read like sections of "Ideal Marriage" or similar textbooks on sexual pleasure. Antony's friends, with whom he holds long and stilted conversations about socialism and communism, are given names, but they might more honestly be labeled the Capitalist, the Communist, the Socialist and so on, like figures in a cartoon. When Antony, incidentally, is put at a loss in one of these conversations, he takes refuge in declaring that his instincts are more important than logic. And his instincts, keeping to the well traveled middle of the philosophic road, tell him that both capitalism and communism are wrong, that the happiness of the individual is paramount. Unfortunately they do not tell him enough; they do not tell him how the individual who cannot use Antony's solution, who cannot, that is, retire to a Mediterranean island with an income derived from the detestable machines, is to obtain this happiness. As instincts, they are evasive, and if there were no other evasions in "All Men Are Enemies," if Antony's war experiences were more than suggested, if his business career were not simply slurred over, they would be enough to invalidate the novel as that contribution to the "sensuous, passionate approach to reality" which Mr. Aldington wanted it to be.

MARY MCCARTHY.

Boyhood in the Slums

The Autobiography of a Liverpool Irish Slummy, by Pat O'Mara. New York: The Vanguard Press. 307 pages. $2.50.

PAT O'MARA'S account of life in the Liverpool slums is a story of hunger, disease, degradation, squalor, death —a terrible and needless waste of human energy. The author's father worked at the docks only under the most extreme of necessities—when all other means of procuring money for drink had failed. His favorite sport was wife beating. Once he attempted to throw his wife from an upper-story window, but failed because she would not fit through the opening. Again, he set fire to her hair while she slept, and she was saved only by luck. Almost weekly she visited the clinic for repairs as a result of brawls. Only two of the children survived, a sister and the author. Among the relatives on the maternal side, life was equally precarious. One sister married a syphilitic, and she and her brood met premature deaths. An uncle wasted into a consumptive's grave. Never did the shadow of the dreaded workhouse leave these people or their neighbors; and those whom poverty did not ruin were killed or maimed in the War.

The book is rich in anecdotes illustrating the life and problems of the slummies. For instance, every Saturday the children's shoes were redeemed from the pawnshop; on Monday, they were returned. When the shoes were no longer pawnable, there would be no food, and the father, lacking drink, would again beat the mother. Innumerable scenes from this book might be mentioned—the riots following the sinking of the "Lusitania," the Liverpool police strike, the brawls between Catholics and Protestants, the life of boys on the slum streets, the mothers learning of sons gone down on torpedoed ships, the "rolling" and shanghaiing of foreign sailors. The narrative is constantly relieved by the humor and burlesque natural to this life.

The author escaped from his slum background during the War by going to sea, and then stowed away for America. In Baltimore he became a taxi driver and determined to write. Anyone who has had any experience with slum life, and with the Irish slums of large cities in particular, will recognize the authenticity of this document. It makes one conscious of the annals of the poor as few books do.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

Book Notes

HISTORY

WORLD PANORAMA: 1918-1933, by George Seldes. *Boston: Little Brown and Company. 392 pages. $3.*

Frederick Lewis Allen's "Only Yesterday" told the story of the American decade 1920-30, and all in all the book impressed one as being good, lively narrative with a reasonable percentage of unity and harmony in the theme. "World Panorama" is a failure as a narrative, perhaps because it takes in too much territory, perhaps because its emphasis is journalistic almost exclusively. It follows the headlines of the world press for a period of fifteen years, sometimes itemizing, sometimes breaking out with a good story inlaid with sentiment and gemmed with dramatic effects. But not improbably it lacks a crystalized interpretative formula, for one's impression of the work in retrospect is that it is formless and fragmentary. The tapestry unrolls in patches and ravelings. Furthermore, the sentiment and the dramatic effects pop up with a kind of cam-action certainty which is somewhat over-familiar to readers of the American press. A column or two a day of

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Contents of September issue:

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this brand of prose is not hard to put up with, but by the bookful it palls. "World Panorama" as a reference work is something else again, for in its index one can check the careers of persons prominent in the news, 1918-1933, from A—Abd-El-Krim to Z—Zinovieff.

Psychology

THE APE AND THE CHILD: A Study of Environmental Influence upon Early Behavior, by W. N. and L. A. Kellogg. *New York: Whittlesey House. 341 pages. $3.*

This book is the product of a remarkable, if by no means decisive, experiment in the field of comparative psychology. The authors, who are trained psychologists, conceived the idea of subjecting a baby ape (in this case a chimpanzee) to *exactly* the same environmental influences as their own child, a ten-months'-old boy. The experiment lasted for nine months, after which the ape, Gua, was restored to her normal life at the Yale Anthropoid Experiment Station in Florida. After digesting the rich material assembled from their investigations, the authors summarize their "Conclusions":

That, when reared in the same environment, child and ape acquire a great deal of new behavior which is similar in both, suggesting similar hereditary potentialities and the major influence of the environment in activating them. That the ape's psychological peculiarities did not prevent her behavior from showing many resemblances with that of the child. That the ape showed a marked superiority to the child in certain acts, such as skipping, affectionate reactions (kissing), door-opening, ability to eat with a spoon and drink out of a glass. That, in general, the ape exhibited a *faster rate of learning* than the child, largely explained by a more rapid maturing of the animal as compared with the human. . . . It is clear to the authors that their experiment is highly provisional and inadequate: what it did show was an unexpected plasticity in the organism and "intelligence" of a subhuman subject biologically related to man.

THE WAY OF ALL WOMEN, by M. Esther Harding. With an Introduction by C. G. Jung. *New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 335 pages. $3.*

Dr. Esther Harding has written this intelligent book after a broad experience as general practising physician and consulting analytical psychologist. In his introduction, Dr. Jung describes the book as "an important contribution to the striving of our time for a clarification of the confusion existing in the relationship between the sexes." The underlying ideas that Dr. Harding develops are based on his teachings. Designed for the adult reader of both sexes, the book not only analyzes the causes of prevalent modern problems, but also undertakes to demonstrate a method of living by which the individual may find a workable solution of his own difficulties.

Public Questions

THE DAY AND HOUR SERIES: 1. Science and Civilization, by Guy Stanton Ford. 29 pages; 2. Farm Relief and the Domestic Allotment Plan, by M. L. Wilson. 59 pages; 3. Balanced Deflation, Inflation, or More Depression, by Jacob Viner. 30 pages; 4. International Economic Recovery, by Harold G. Moulton. 25 pages. *Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press. 25 cents each.*

The purpose of this series is to "make available to a wider public interesting and timely discussion presented under university auspices." The first number, by Professor Ford, is a stimulating review of the social implications of scientific research, and carries a strong plea that it is no longer science which must give way to established folkways, but quite the reverse. Professor Wilson discusses in some detail the farm problem and analyzes the various solutions proposed, inclining himself to a broad international understanding. Professor Viner's tract contains some questionable statements: for example, "There *is* a curative, a self-corrective, process in the economic mechanism which *does* tend to bring depressions to an end, and which has always hitherto succeeded in doing so" (italics are the author's). Dr. Viner, however, does not believe that we should content ourselves with sitting back and

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letting this process take its course. Harold Moulton is already well known for his contributions to economic theory; his well informed discussions of debts, tariffs, commercial agreements and military disarmament may not lead to the Promised Land, but they certainly show some of the obstructions on the way to it. It is to be hoped that future numbers of this series will touch on more solid ground than orthodox economics and show a little more of the realism which marks Professor Ford's contribution.

THE WAY OF ESCAPE, by Sir Philip Gibbs. *New York: Harper and Brothers. 300 pages. $3.*

"No miracles are needed to put the world fairly right," the author believes. The condition of the world today is due to "the downfall of intelligence . . . [and] it may be cured by the working of intelligence within reach of the human mind as at present existing." There must be: reduction of tariffs, liquidation of debts, limitation of arms (not complete disarmament, as has been proposed by Russia, because "missionaries of Russian Communism . . . might come in their legions to overthrow the last stronghold of Capitalism"); a rise in commodity prices, stabilization of money, etc. Sir Philip also proposes a "fair reward" for labor (and, in the same paragraph, a reduction in wages), new colonization movements, an international army for the League of Nations and, perhaps, temporary dictatorship. The writer is an idealist, an enthusiast and a well informed journalist. There is considerable naïveté in his conviction that our problems may be solved simply by listing "things to be done" and calling upon the world to be "intelligent" enough to do them.

Fiction

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS, by Basil Nicholson. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.*

If capitalism should ever die and be buried, this very entertaining novel might be read as a legend of the bygone age when men were rugged individuals and business was business; at the present it seems just a trifle too close to reality. The hero is a consistent rascal. He begins life on Easter Island by killing a man for a few pounds, fleecing his father and then leaving home. At the age of thirteen he has committed five murders and accumulated £3,000, besides hoaxing the United States government into shelling a South American country so that he might get free transportation in an airplane. In England he goes in for bigger and better transactions: among other things he acquires a mortgage over Oxford University, introduces the white-slave traffic there and finances a trip to the moon. Interrupted by a jealous husband who kills him, he goes to heaven, where he puts one over on an angel and sneaks through the gates.

Contributors

Louis Adamic is the author of "Dynamite," "Laughing in the Jungle" and a book based on his recent visit to the Balkans. He is planning a lecture tour addressing immigrant groups on their relation to contemporary America.

Rose M. Stein, statistician for the League for Social Justice in Pittsburgh, was formerly connected with a real-estate-bond firm.

Paul F. Brissenden is a teacher of Economics in Columbia University. He was formerly special agent of the United States Commission on Industrial Relations and economic adviser to the United States Personnel Classification Board.

Isidor Schneider, who handles publicity for the Macaulay Company, is at work on his second novel.

Raymond Leslie Buell, research director of the Foreign Policy Association, is at work on a book dealing with our Caribbean policy.

Mary McCarthy, who recently was graduated from Vassar College, has contributed criticism to various magazines.

James T. Farrell, the author of two novels, will issue his third, "The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan," this October under the imprint of the Vanguard Press.

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